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OTHER HANDS

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Editorial: Spreading the Word

Welcome to our second annual double issue! It's been a long haul since our last issue in April, with the completion of the *Southern Gondor* manuscript and other commitments hanging over me; but at last we are back, and will hopefully be able to stay on schedule with future issues. (It all rests on YOUR submissions coming in on time, so don't be squeamish!)

Anyway, there's plenty to tell about before we get to the introductions for this issue. Firstly, the *Southern Gondor* realm module is FINISHED and safely in ICE's hands! Jessica Ney-Grimm has begun editing, and we can look forward to an early 1996 release date (further details on this and other forthcoming publications in "Frontlines" for this issue). Even better news: since April the number of subscriptions has reached the highest yet— 51! And the number is growing every few-weeks. Thanks to all of you for your continued support.

Among our many new subscribers we are honored to include Wesley Frank, eminent author of the *Arnor* and *Shire* realm modules, who heard about us from the advertisement we put in the Gencon issue of *The Gamer's Connection.* This is heartening, because the more active *MERP* authors we can get on the bandwagon, the more *Other Hands* will be able to serve its intended function as a forum for discussion, debate, and presentation for honing what gets published by ICE. A final bit of news is that ICE has begun to commission and actively search for writers to author new *MERP* modules, which means that we will (hopefully) see a lot of great new products coming out in the not-too-distant future.

And now for the introductions. To begin with, Fredrik Ekman, a Tolkien-related computer games enthusiast, has proposed a new-column, rather appropriately dubbed "Digital Hands," in which he hopes to keep us abreast of the latest and the greatest products available in that field. To be sure, this is not strict

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role-playing, but if you, the readers, would like (or not like) to have this as a regular feature of *Other Hands,* let me know. Another "crossover" area with Middle-earth gaming will be ICE's new line of collectible card decks (following from the success of *Magic: The Gathering)* adapted to Tolkien's world, beginning with their core release (due out this Christmas), *Middle-earth: The Wizards.* I have interviewed Coleman Charlton of ICE (the game's principal designer) and have summarized the substance of our discussion of the game in a short article in this issue. One of the ways in which this line of products will overlap with the existing *MERP* series will be in its use of characters, artifacts, and sites developed in the *MERP* modules, accompanied by lavish new artwork.

We begin our larger contributions with a lengthy essay by Bernie Roessler entitled "The Streets of Minas Tirith," which is a response and development of some of the logistic issues raised by Anders Blixt in his article on the same subject a few issues back *(OH* 6/7: 25). Whether one agrees or disagrees with Bernie's analysis, I think the enduring value to be found in such exercises is that they help uncover the implicit assumptions that govern rational game design. Who knows? Perhaps we will get a third viewpoint on this next issue.

In the preamble to his article, Dirk Brandherm anticipates your response as "Oh no, not again an article dealing with magic in Middle-earth!" Indeed, we have TWO articles on magic in Middle-earth this issue (the other by Wesley Frank). But I think that Dirk and Wesley have both made a real advance over previous discussions of this topic in that they have moved beyond the topic of magic "in general," and have moved on to talk about magic and spells in the concrete, with a view to practical application within a game. Dirk does a close reading of some key texts in *The Lord of the Rings,* and has come to the important conclusion that Tolkien himself appears to have made some fairly precise internal distinctions between different kinds of magic.

For his part, Wesley has assumed the perspective of a Gamemaster who wishes to run a game with Tolkienian flavor while still satisfying the expectations about magic-use that most fantasy role-players will bring with them to Middle-earth. From the vantage point of the Tolkien purist, Wesley's treatment might well be viewed as "unorthodox;" but then again, not all gamers who are attracted to Tolkien's world are interested in meticulously adhering to holy writ. The play's the thing, whatever style one may prefer.

Not to be outdone, Torquil Gault returns to our pages with a set of helpful herb and spell reference tables for those who roleplay in Middle-earth with *MERP* or *Rolemaster.* Also as an insert we are featuring an annotatcd map of the Ice-bay of Forochel which Wesley had originally prepared tor the *Arnor* module, but which never made it to the final version. Jessica Ney-Grimm has informed me that another author has undertaken the task of a *Forodwaith* module, which may present a map that differs from that of Wesley. Still, it will be nice to have something to carry us through the interim.

Following the tradition begun last issue, we have printed some more adventure material excised from *Southern Gondor* due to space limitations. This issue's offerings are by Magnus Seter and Anders Blixt. Magnus was in charge of the Harithilien material for the module, and his scenario "The High Cost of Living," deals with the greed of one of the Harithilien nobility, and opens possible avenues for getting player-characters mixed up in local crime and punishment. Continuing in what might be called the "Gondorian vice" genre, Anders has devised a mini-campaign set on the eastern frontiers of Harondor, in which player-characters can take part in an unexpected gold-rush that has swept across the foothills of the Ephel Dúath. With strong evocations of the American West, Anders depicts a land of rugged prospectors, greedy criminals, resentful natives, and corrupt Gondorian officials in "All That Glitters."

Several of our readers have, in the past, queried me concerning Tolkien Enterprises, who were responsible for licensing ICE as the exclusive publishers of Middle-earth role-playing products. It is therefore with great pleasure that we are now able to offer the transcript of an interview conducted with Laurie Battle, the licensing director for Tolkien Enterprises, on the subject of the Middle-earth license. I'm sure vou will all find this of great interest, whether or not you actually play *MERP.*

To round things off, we have three new product reviews: of *The Shire* realm module, of the *Rolemaster Standard Rules,* and of the *Laketown* citadel module. All in all, I hope that this double issue will measure up to the success of its progenitor from last year, and I hope to see many new exciting pieces to fill the coming January issue. Until then, happy reading!

Chris Seeman

October 31, 1995

MAE CULPA: ERRATA FOR *OTHER HANDS* 9

Agh! More mistakes to report. Oh well, here are the corrections…

Deena McKinney-Martin > Deena McKinney
[Hickman article] Glidor > Gildor
Martin Runqvist > Martin Rundkvist (who is an *archaeologist*—not anthropologist—by trade)

FINE PRINT

Other Hands is an international gaming journal devoted to fantasy role-playing set in J.R.R. Tolkien's secondary world of Middle-earth. It is a quarterly, nonprofit publication welcoming submissions dealing with any aspect of gaming in the context of Tolkien's world: scenario ideas, rule suggestions, gaming product reviews, gamemastering aids, bibliographic resources, essays on Middle-earth, and whatever else our readership would like to see in print. In a word, Other Hands aims to be the definitive Tolkien-related gaming journal for a worldwide role-playing community: Within the pages of Other Hands, the interested gamer may publish materials with reference to any game mechanics he or she chooses (including Rolemaster and Middle-earth Role Playing). Such gaming material may deal with any time period ol Tolkien's world, and need not be bound to what has already seen print in Iron Crown's modules. Other Hands provides this freedom because it is a nonprofit publication. Subscription rates are as follows: inside the USA—1 issue $3/4 issues $12; outside the USA—surface 1 issue $3.50/4 issues $14—air 1 issue $4.50/4 issues $18. Payment should be made to Chris Seeman: PO Box 1213, Novato, CA 94948, USA. No Eurochccks, please!

Submissions arc welcome in any form (preferably legible), but arc easiest to edit when received on a floppy disk. Word for Windows is the editing software currently in use, so if there is any question as to the readability of your disk, please save your document in ASCII or text-only format and include a hard copy. All submitted materials remain the copyright of the author unless we are otherwise informed. All submissions must be sent to Chris Seeman: PO Box 1213, Novato, CA 94948 (USA). Please write me or call it you encounter any difficulties, my phone number is (415) 892—9066. Please note also that I may be reached over Internet: chris1224@aol.com

Communications

A note to the readers: this column has tended to consist primarily of letters addressed to me as editor of Other Hands. *However, there is no reason that it has to be that way.* Communications *is not meant to be my "daily affirmation column"—criticisms of the journal are also welcomed and, as Nathan Smith rightly points out, should be encouraged. At the same time, I should also note that for the most part I do not determine the content of* Other Hands *(I receive far too little material to enjoy the luxury of rejecting pieces); so if you have an alternative viewpoint than that expressed in one of our articles or adventures, you might consider addressing your response to the author of the article rather than to me. After all, the main purpose of* Communications *is to get our readers talking with one another and exchanging ideas.*

Dear Chris,

Greetings. First off I would like to say that *Other Hands* is an excellent journal dedicated to Middle-earth gaming in many aspects. Lately I have been enjoying the articles on religion in Middle-earth. I would also like to commend Gary Hunnewell on speaking his mind in a letter published last issue. As a fanzine enthusiast myself, I think it is nice when journals receive praise. Yet, I think it is even more helpful when it receives opinions and friendly criticism which gives it a better idea on how to produce a more interesting publication. Keep up the great work.

Nathan Smith
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Dear Chris and Other Hands,

First let me say that I am glad to see a more optimistic editorial about the future of Middle-earth gaming in *OH* 9. If I may comment on the subject myself, I have to say it appears there really is no need to be concerned just yet. After all, ICE has been able to make a business out of selling *Middle-earth Role Playing* products for the last thirteen years or so. I doubt it they would have committed to the revision of almost their entire line (in which you, Chris, are playing such a large role) unless they felt there was a future for the hobby. With over 300,000 copies of die *MERP* rules sold (and that's only the English language version), it seems we only need to locate each other. *Other Hands* might just be the vehicle for this endeavor. Such contact will not only strengthen the hobby but will in turn cause *Other Hands* itself to grow.

I also wanted to say that the correspondence from "the playing Tolkienists" in Russia and the Ukraine was most interesting to me for several reasons, not least of which is that my rather complicated family history has left close relatives in Siberia; although I have never met them and they are quite a bit older. I hope we hear more from the people in these groups in the future.

Finally, I wanted to respond to Gary Hunnewell's letter in *OH 9.* As we all know, everyone has their own tastes and preferences, but I just wanted to state for the record that Anders Blixt's article on Sauron's daughter in *OH* #5 was my all time favorite article.

Bernie Roessler
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Dear Chris,

In all seriousness, *Other Hands* is great stuff. My first thought about an article is "The Recurrent Ringwraith," an idea that I have used in my own campaign, but is also one of the more "heretical" concepts to ever appear in your publication. (Hey, *I* thought Sauron's daughter was cool...)

The Recurrent Ringwraith postulates that the position of a Ringwraith, a bearer of one of the Nine Rings, might change over time. That is, that one of them might die and be replaced with another. While this is certainly contrary to Tolkien's vision, it has many advantages during a game: 1) heroes can confront the Ringwraiths and have a real opportunity to defeat them. The Nazgûl are such well-remembered villains from LotR, it's really a shame to keep them locked away from the players, 2) long-running villains can be made into Ringwraiths, and this dire fate can even serve as a temptation to players. Galadriel and Gandalf both were well tempted by the One, surely the Nine might tempt mere mortals, 3) this reconciles the supposed might of die Nazgûl with their occasional incompetence. *(This* far away from four terrified hobbits! These are Sauron's mightiest servants?) Obviously the rare blunder on the part of the Nazgûl must be due to a new person under that cloak. Someone thousands of years old wouldn't make that kind of mistake, 4) it allows die Nazgûl to be from Mannish cultures other than those prevalent during the middle of the Second Age, when they were all formed. Cultures which rise to preeminence during the Third Age, for example, might have given rise to sorcerer-kings who later become Ringwraiths, replacing the occasional fallen.

Well, there's a lot more, and I don't want to bore you with all the many details, but I thought that I would run it by you. Do you think that somediing like this would be appropriate? In any case, thanks again for the mailing and for staying with *OH* long enough for this wanderer to come along.

Jason Vester
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Dear Chris,

Just got *Other Hands* 6/7. Thanks much. Well, what a difference a year makes. *Arnor* and *The Kin-strife* are distinguished veterans, and the next generation is standing proudly forth. I read a review of the *Hobbit* boardgamc in a magazine this weekend. Along the way, the reviewer noted that ICE's *Middle-earth Role Playing* material is doing well in its new incarnation. Feel free to take some credit.

A number of interesting pieces in the issue. I'll be copping the adventures for my own campaign, of course. Jason's evaluation of trade with Eriador matches my own. Note, however, that Eriador is never completely depopulated, so a few Umbareans and Gondorians can make the difficult trip around the Cape of Andrast when the urge strikes them. The rest of the articles seem to have wound up in *The Kin-strife,* as promised.

Your review of *Arnor* made some salient points. The worst of the art is being corrected in the second printing. That is all I know about it, as I don't think they are putting much editorial time in correcting the typos and I certainly wasn't consulted. I thought the sketch maps were abominable in *Arnor.* I sent them in six pages of corrected maps for the second printing, and I had to beg Jessica to let me do it!

Your description of coming events in this *Other Hands* (dating to the summer of 1994?) reminded me of a curious phenomenon. When I went to Gencon that August I found that Dean B. and her crew had never heard of *The Shire* module. It was on its way to editing at the time, but I don't recall hearing a rumor or blurb about it until it was practically at the printers! I do recall hearing about *The Kin-strife* about that time. *The Shire* seems to have been the best-kept secret in role-playing. I wonder why?

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FRONTLINES

By the time you read this, there is a good chance that the revised *Angmar* realm module will be in the stores. (As I write it is supposedly on its way back from the printer's.) Directly following on its heels (scheduled for a December release date) will be the revised *Mirkwood* module. As many of you are probably aware, both ot these *MERP* modules have already undergone a revision in the past, and (I believe) their current incarnations will not contain any major expansions of new material. There will, however, be new artwork, and all stats will be updated to the 2nd edition *MERP, Rolemaster,* and *Lord of the Rings Adventure Game* systems. Also in December will be the anticipated release of *Middle-earth: the Wizards,* ICE's first collectible card game based on Tolkien's world.

Next in line, and projected for a February 1996 release, will be the *Southern Gondor* realm module, which is almost entirely original in its content. Not counting the adventure material and the artwork, this tome is nearly 225 pages in length, a hundred of which are taken up by an exhaustive gazetteer (with full translations of the Elvish) of all place-names appearing on the maps accompanying the module. It also includes a thirty-page history of Gondor, covering the entire span from the First through the early Fourth Ages, and a forty-page chapter of biographies and full stats for the most important individuals in Gondorian history (e.g., Aragorn, Castamir, Eärnil, etc.). Another prominent feature of the text is a chapter on Corsair warfare, which provides a set of easy-to-use mass naval combat rules (similar in scope to the mass land combat rules that appeared in *The Kin-strife).* In addition to reproducing the existing maps of Gondor, this module will also contain the first-ever fully detailed map of Harondor, which has been devised in close collaboration with the authors of the current *Umbar* and *Near Harad* projects.

The next *MERP* module which is definitely scheduled for release (after *Southern Gondor)* will be called *The Rohirrim,* and will comprise a re-issue of material from the now out of print *Riders of Rohan,* as well as a complete "rogue's gallery" of bios and stats for all the most prominent Northmen in Tolkien's world (following the model of the *Elves* and *Valar* & *Maiar* supplements.

As for work in progress, Wesley Frank has recently received the green light to write a Near *Harad* realm module, which he hopes to have completed within six months. (Is this guy on speed, or is it just that the rest of us are overly slothful?) The most recent news on the *Umbar* revision is that Jason Beresford is currently attempting to adapt and expand his material in relation to the new information contained in *Southern Gondor* and the revised layout of Umbar that appeared in *The Kin-strife* module. He is shooting tor a completion date sometime next year (maybe over the summer). The latest news from William Wilson is that work on the *Southern Middle-earth Gazetteer* is still underway.

I myself plan to begin serious work on *Northern Gondor* sometime next year (summer or early fall), and will probably take about a year to finish it. After that comes the *Dúnedain* peoples book, and *then* (gasp) it looks like I will be embarking on a *Paths of the Dead* citadel module. Around the year 2000 (far too distant in the future for anything certain), I will hopefully be undertaking citadel modules for *Dol Amroth* and *Pelargir.* Anders Blixt and Company may be making a proposal to ICE in the near future to write a *Wainridcr Wars* sourcebook (similar in scope to *The Kin-strife,* but focused on Gondor and Rhovanion in the 19th and 20th centuries of the Third Age), depending on whether a rather lengthy mini-campaign which has been written for the *Southern Gondor* module gets included or not.

That's all for now, see you again in three months!

Reporter: Chris Seeman

Digital Hands

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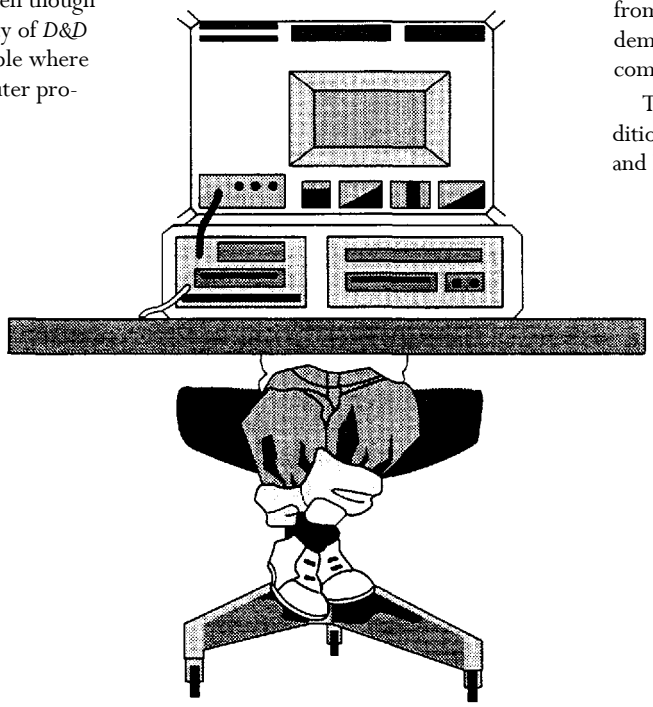
Welcome to the first Digital Hands, *a new-regular column in* Other Hands. Now, *you may wonder, what is this, and who am I writing it? I will begin by answering the second part of that question. My name is Fredrik Ekman, and I am a Computer Science student from Sweden. More important, in this context at least, is that two of my main interests are literature (with Tolkien as one of my favorite authors) and games (especially computer games). I read* The Lord of the Rings *for the first time m 1985 and played the game* The Hobbit *shortly after that. I was immediately fascinated by the concept of being able to walk the lands of Middle-earth, and have since tried to find as many other computer games set in Middle-earth as possible. During the past two years, I have created and maintained a list of Tolkien computer games, which is published on the Internet. (For those with Internet access, the list can be downloaded from ftp://ftp. math. uni-hamburg. de/pub/misc/tolkien/games.list.)*

What, then, docs this have to do with role-playing games? Allow me for a moment to bring you back in time. Let us go back to 1973, when Gary Gygax created the first role-playing game: *Dungeons & Dragons (D&D).* As I suppose you all know, Gygax was obviously, directly and indirectly, very influenced by Tolkien, even though he has later denied this. The popularity of *D&D* quickly spread, and one group of people where it was particularly popular was computer programmers. As a result, several programmers tried to adapt role-playing to the computer.

One of these was Don Woods, who wrote a program called *Adventure.* In it, he tried to simulate a role-playing session in that the computer was game master, giving descriptions of the player's surroundings and accepting simplified English sentences, such as *light lamp* or *open grate.* The game was further developed by Willie Crowther and in 1977 it was distributed through the ARPAnet, the forerunner of today's Internet. It quickly became extremely popular and programmers spent so much time playing it that most computer departments in America lost about one or two weeks of effective work.

Adventure, the first text adventure, was mostly problem based (unlike the then more common hack-and-slash variety of role-playing), but another game would soon come to those who preferred killing everyone in sight. It was called *Rogue* and was originally conceived in 1983 by Glen Wichman and Michael Toy, later further developed by Toy and Kenneth Arnold. Unlike *Adventure, Rogue* presented the player's surroundings in the form of a map of the dungeons he was traveling and commands were in the form of single keystrokes. *Rogue* was of a kind now referred to as computer role-playing games or, simply, RPGs.



Both *Adventure* and *Rogue* were set in a fantasy world based on that of *D&D.* They were thus indirectly inspired by Tolkien and so were most of their early successors. It was only natural that the majority of the Tolkien computer games that were eventually developed came to be either text adventures or RPGs. There you have it: the pre-history of the Tolkien computer games.

Today, text adventures have unfortunately gone out ot fashion, while RPGs are still very popular. The crude text-only maps of the early games have been replaced by graphics and the single keystrokes by mouse. Today they also tend to be more based on problem-solving than they used to.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about what *Digital Hands* will contain. The next column will bring you up-to-date on what is happening on the front today. What new games are out there? What is currently being developed? In future columns, I hope to have reviews of popular games, information and rumors about publishers and authors, more about the history of the games, their raison d'être, and much more. If there is an interest, I could also give hints and solutions to problems in the games, but then I need to get specific questions from you, the reader. Unless there is a strong demand for such, I will *not* include maps or complete solutions to games.

This column deals with a borderland of traditional role-playing. I still hope that both you and I will benefit from it.

The Streets of Minas Tirith

Bernie Roessler:
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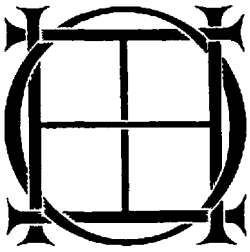
This article was inspired by Anders Blixt's discussion of the logistics of Mines Tirith in Issue 6/7. Other parts of my comments are based on analysis of the map and text of ICE's 1988 Minas Tirith *city supplement. Hopefully, not too much of this article is rendered obsolete by the release of the revised version, which I have not seen. I hope I have done justice to both Anders, whose many articles I have enjoyed reading in* Other Hands, *and to Graham Staplehurst, who authored the original supplement.*



Introduction

Minas Tirith, and all of Middle-earth, existed originally nowhere else but in the vivid imagination (or, as he himself would put it, the "fantasy") of J.R.R. Tolkien. But those whose hearts have stirred when the cock crowed as Gandalf sat astride Shadowfax at the Great Gate facing the Witch-king, and the horns of Rohan first echoed across the Pelennor, have also entered Tolkien's creation. Others, wishing to further explore this secondary world, have had their alter egos stroll the streets of Minas Tirith in search of adventure.

Some of these role-players, like most readers of *The Lord of the Rings,* will ignore many of the details in this world, especially questions of logistics, with which much of this article is concerned. They would receive no admonishment from Professor Tolkien, if I understand the views expressed in his *Letters* correctly. There are those of us like the professor, however, who find questions about such detail "fatally attractive." My guess is that most of the readers of *Other Hands* fall into this latter category. We have experienced secondary belief and, like Tolkien, have experienced enchantment through the sub-creative process.

Secondary belief, as Tolkien stated in his essay "On Fairy-stories," is not suspended disbelief. On occasion, while closely examining the secondary world, one may uncover aspects of it which are inconsistent with our primary world, and not caused by whatever special characteristics the secondary world may have.

If we do not choose to ignore those inconsistencies—to do so would be a form of suspended disbelief-—then the role of translator of *The Red Book of Westmarch,* which Tolkien assumed, allows us two other choices: 1) we can say that the chronicler of *The Red Book* has erred, or 2) we can engage too in further subcreation to somehow explain the inconsistency. Although some explanations of this type can strain the limits of credibility, I believe that in a world as rich and full of wonder as Middle-earth there is much room for the unlikely to become probable, if handled with creativity.

At first, after reading Anders Blixt's article on Minas Tirith, I thought that I would need quite a deal of creativity to make the logistical situation of the city seem reasonable. However, after doing some research (and still using a little bit of creativity) I found that while we can all agree on the beauty of the city, perhaps the design isn't quite so improbable after all.

Direct research is limited by the small amount of source material written by Tolkien. Therefore, much of the research is also a process of finding analogous source materials from our primary world. Often, however, one only searches for information that supports one's position, and ignores the rest. As such, any conclusions presented are often little better than a statement of my own opinion. With this forewarning, I will proceed with my arguments.

The Founding of the City

Although Medieval Europe is in many ways the closest analogy we have to Middle-earth, it may be misleading to rely overly much on this analogy. As for the Realms-in-Exile, the political system seems to me to have had more in common with the Roman Empire. Social differences include a better educated and better fed populace. Scientifically, the Dúnedain seemed to be superior to Medieval Europeans in engineering and navigational skills. All these differences, I believe, would have produced a civilization which was not only materially but psychologically different from that of Medieval Europe.[1]

There were also other elements which would be even more important in shaping the psyche of the exiles. The indisputable presence of irredeemably hostile, monstrous creatures would certainly have made them very concerned about the survival of their society. This would be especially true in Gondor, before the first overthrow of Sauron. Also, the presence of the Elves, an immortal race superior to humans in almost every way, would not have added to the Dúnedain's sense of security, no matter how benign their intentions.

I believe it was a strong Elvish influence, along with the longer lifespan of the Dúnedain (or at least their nobles), which played an important role in making Gondorian society as traditional as it was. Keeping this in mind, it is my assertion that city planning would be effected by these dif-

ferences, psychological and material. So, although many of the cities of medieval Europe were built with relatively strong defenses, none of them were built to defend against dragons.

Graham Staplehurst writes that Minas Tirith (or "Minas Anor," the original name of the city which I will henceforth refer to it as) was constructed around an older Númenórean fortress, which seems reasonable enough. The site was very important strategically, overlooking the narrow gap of land between the White Mountains and the Anduin. As such, like Minas Ithil it was originally built primarily for defensive rather than commercial reasons. This is underlined by the name of the city, the "Tower of the Setting Sun."[2]

According to Graham, construction of the outer walls of Minas Anor began just after the arrival of Anárion, and was completed some sixty-five years later. Although certainly not an impossible task for the exiled Númenóreans, this would have been a serious undertaking. What would have inspired the Dúnedain to build such a massive defensive structure, so soon after Númenor's downfall?

The answer, I believe, is that they knew what was coming. Sauron, upon returning to Mordor, would naturally have put his Ring back on. This would have been immediately detected by the wearers of the three Elven rings, one of whom at that time was Gil-galad, friend of Elendil. Upon learning of Sauron's return, Elendil would have quickly warned his sons *via* palantír. This dire news set off the construction boom on both sides of the Anduin. For the Gondorians indeed set about constructing not one but three cities. While not the largest in size of these three (Minas Anor, Minas Ithil, and Osgiliath), Minas Anor was given the greatest defenses.[3]

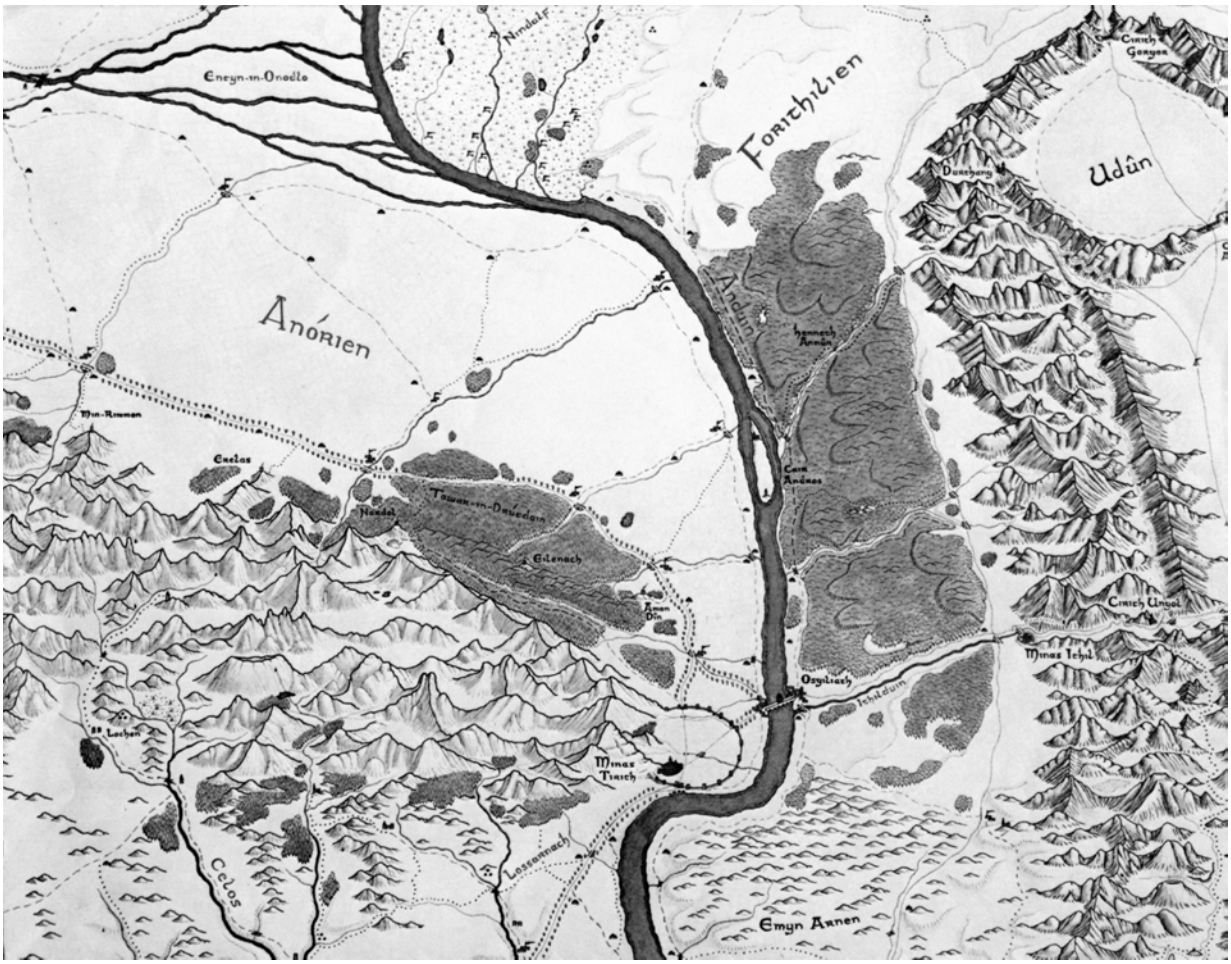
It was with some hyperbole when I mentioned that Gondorian cities were built with defense against dragons in mind; for this was not, I believe, what the designers of Minas Anor actually tried to do. Throughout the Second Age, Sauron had never been able to recruit a dragon to his own uses. Dragons have their own agenda. Even Morgoth in the First Age had trouble controlling Glaurung. Rather, Minas Anor was built to defend against the type of forces Sauron had previously used and would indeed use again: hordes of Orcs and Men. Keeping this in mind, the dual Kings of Gondor set to constructing their defenses.

Isildur, the older and seemingly prouder brother, chose the role of commanding Minas Ithil, where the first blow would fall.

ICE's *Minas Ithil* supplement states that this city too was built around an older Númenórean site, established to keep an eye on Mordor.[4] In my view, because of its vulnerable position, Isildur intended to only delay Sauron's forces at Minas Ithil (and was successful in this goal when the war actually began). The main line of defense would be the Anduin, which was difficult to cross along its lower reaches, so long as the Dúnedain maintained their naval superiority.[5]

Nevertheless, Isildur and Anárion realized that eventually Sauron would be able to win a crossing over the Anduin, even if he had to go north of the Falls of Rauros. If this occurred before help arrived from the north, Osgiliath would be invested from both sides, and only Minas Anor would stand between Sauron's armies and the heart of Gondor. Recognizing this, and with an unlimited supply of granite immediately nearby, the Kings ordered the construction of their greatest defenses at the foot of Mount Mindolluin.

Having been given the command to construct as strong a fortification as possible, the engineers of Gondor set out and built the mighty walls and Great Gate of Minas Anor. Seated on a bedrock of solid granite, the walls could not be undermined by tunneling. Therefore (as Tolkien wrote) the Gate, strong as it might be, was still the weakest point.



Not wanting thereby to compound any weakness, the engineers decided to construct only one gate, despite the inconvenience this would cause to the ease of supply during times of peace.

To reiterate, the Dúnedain were a very traditional society. When they built things, they did so on a large scale and for the very long term—and they built to defend against powers our medieval forebears only encountered in their nightmares.

The City and Commerce

Now that I have proposed reasons as to why Minas Anor was constructed as it was, we shall turn to the effects of that construction. I believe that we, the readers of *Other Hands,* are making the effort to recreate a secondary world as realistically as possible and, in many cases, examine aspects ot this world as if it were inhabited by real people. If we go to this amount of effort in our examination of Middle-earth, should we not also suppose that the inhabitants of this fantasy world are just as intelligent as we? I must maintain that the city's planners would have foreseen the traffic problems created by the solitary gate of Minas Anor, even if Tolkien did not.

If the situation was unworkable, they would have constructed additional gates despite the weakening of the defenses this would have caused. Since they did not, we must assume they arrived at another solution, or we must accept a degree of suspended disbelief.

The amount ot traffic in Minas Anor would be dependent on three factors: the population of the city, the amount of food and goods needed to support that population, and the efficiency of the distribution of the food and goods.

City Population and Area

The population of Minas Anor (or any city) will be dependent on the city's size and its population density. The best description of the city that we have from Tolkien is, of course, in the "Minas Tirith" chapter (RotK, Book V Chapter 1). Although no exact dimensions are given, except the height of the hill and tower, both the designer of the map provided with the 1988 ICE supplement, and Karen Wynn Fonstad in her *Atlas of Middle-earth* (revised edition, pg. 138) show a city of generally the same size.

Fonstad's version does differ, in that it presents us with elliptical walls. Using the (larger scale) ICE map, one finds a measurement of approximately 2,000 feet from the center of the city to the outer walls (I apologize to our non-American readers for using the English system of measurement, but somehow they seem more appropriate for Middle-earth). This calculated out to give us a city of about 252 square acres in size.[6] Let us accept this figure for the moment.

We shall now examine the city's population density. After a long search, the only reference I could find regarding historical population density was 100 people per acre for cities of the ancient Mediterranean (Colin McEvedy, *The Atlas of Ancient History,* pg. 44). Although averages can often be misleading, I feel that the density of a Gondorian city would most likely be below, rather than above, any average of this sort. As I stated previously, the Dúnedain tended to do things on a large scale. If the imposing walls of Minas Anor are not enough to convince you of this, then consider the carvings of the Argonath. I believe that any city of the Dúnedain would tend to have wide streets and ample room for its inhabitants.

This would be particularly true for Minas Anor, which had always been a prestigious city. It came under royal patronage early, and soon became the summer residence of the King. It was also a center for Gondorian religious practices, because of the presence of the White Tree, as indicated by Michael Hickman in his article concerning that topic (OH 8: 11).

If, then, we accept both this density of no more than 100 people per acre, and a city-size of 252 acres, we arrive at a population of a little more than 25,000 inhabitants. If this were the actual population of the city, much of the logistical problem would already be solved. However, both Anders in his article and Graham in the city supplement feel that the population should be much higher— 50,000 and 45,000 respectively. I would not disagree with this. The population of a city of the importance of Minas Anor could very well reach 50,000. I also, however, would not dispute Mr. McEvedy's figure. He is, after all, a professional in his field with some actual hard evidence, albeit taken from our primary world.

This leaves us with the alternative that the artists' rendering of the city is actually too small. If you agree with this conclusion, there is a solution that would not require the redrawing of any maps. Simply change the scale of the map, so that the distance from the city center to the outer wall is 2,800, rather than 2,000, feet. For example, on the 1988 edition map, the scale would change from l" = 300 ft. to 1" = 420 ft. This would give an area of close to 500 acres. The beneficial side effect of this is that it gives more room for the wide streets I believe would be present.[7]

Breakdown of Levels By Area and Population

Lvl	Distance	Acres^2	% Area	Est. % Pop.
1	2,800'	127	25%	32%
2	2,415'	104	20%	25%
3	2,050'	86	17%	17%
4	1,680'	61	12%	11%
5	1,365'	57	11%	9%
6	975'	45	9%	5%
7	575'	37	7%	1%

Legend

Distance = approximate average distance from the city center to inner wall of level.

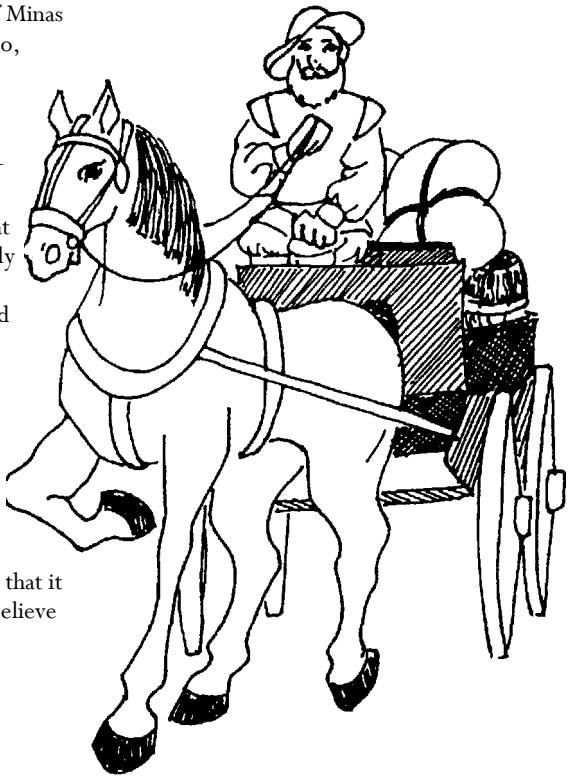
% Area (acres^2) = percentage of total city area located within this level. Due to rounding, total is > 100%. Total Area = 517 acres.

Est. % Pop. = estimated percentage of total city population who live on this level.

Note: One eighth (12.5%) of the potential area of levels 1-5, and 5% of level 6, were subtracted, to account for the area occupied by the arm of Mount Mindolluin and the Citadel Rock. The 13 acre area atop the Citadel Rock was added to level 7.

Food, Fuel, and Goods

I will use the same estimate ot six pounds of food needed per person per day given by Anders. Some research on my part confirmed this to be a good estimate for a well rounded diet, with not too much (expensive) meat. Although the population could prob-



ably survive on less, six pounds a day would ensure that they were well fed and could even host a few Hobbits. I will, however, use a wagon capacity of 1200 pounds (as given in *Rolemaster).* Presumably, this capacity was based on some historical research. For 50,000 people, this would require an average of 250 wagons to reach the city each day, to fulfill the food needs.

Most pre-industrial cities (and many Third World cities today) had a fair amount of livestock roaming the streets, including pigs and goats. I don't believe this would be true of Minas Anor. Its status as a royal as well as sacred city, and apparent emphasis on cleanliness, would preclude these larger food animals. There would be, however, some minor food production in the form of poultry and eggs. (Remember that a cock crowed at the Great Gate!) Whatever food these animals provided would have been offset by the need for their feed, so there would be no net reduction in the amount of food needing to enter the city. These smaller animals would, however, provide an important source of protein.

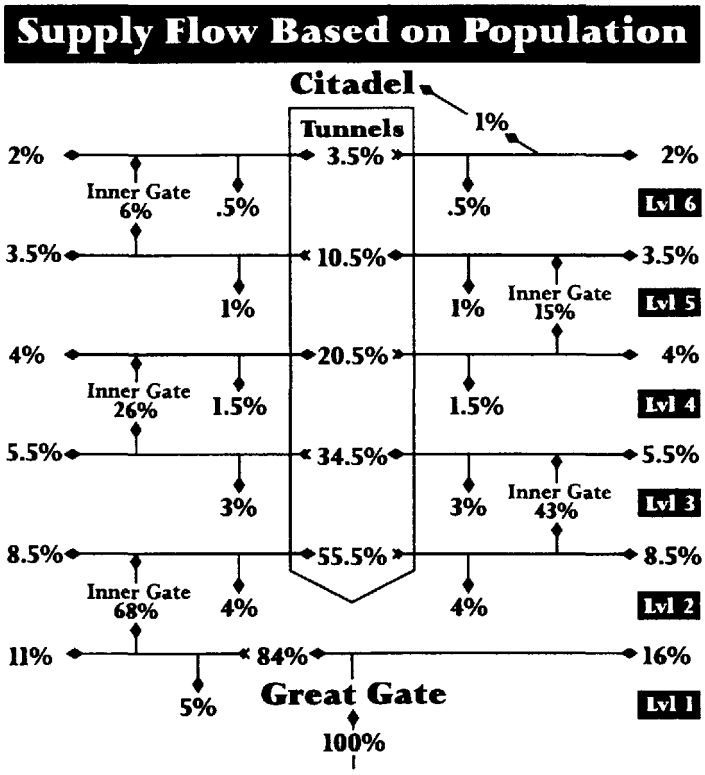
The solid rock foundations of the city would have prevented any significant gardening within the city; if space limitations alone did not. Flowers, however, seem to have been in great evidence when the newly crowned Aragorn entered the city. I presume these were grown in window boxes.

Another important requirement for the populace would be fuel for heat and cooking. This would be primarily in the form of wood and charcoal brought in from sources in the nearby mountains and forests. Peat would also probably be available from the plentiful marshy areas along the Anduin. Since Minas Anor seems to have a rather temperate climate, heating needs should not be very substantial. Gondorian architecture was also probably advanced enough to make use of strategically placed windows to aid in the heating (and cooling) of buildings.

I estimate that four wagon-loads of a mix of the above material would meet the heating and cooling requirements for a year for an average household of six people (three adults and three children). I must admit that, due to the very limited amount of written information on this subject available, that this is a very rough estimate. It is probably, however, an overestimate. This calculates out to another 91 wagons needing to reach the city each day.

I would like to mention that not all these wagon-loads need necessarily be actual wagons. My research found that mule trains were used extensively for the transport of goods in southern and eastern Europe well into the 19th century. Mule trains would be especially well-suited for bringing fuel supplies down from the mountains. Using the *Rolemaster* transport chart again, we find that a mule train of five mules would carry the equivalent of a wagon-load of goods.

Finally, and the most difficult to estimate, would be the amount of goods imported in both raw materials and finished products. To properly calculate this would require the reconstruction of the entire economy of central Gondor, but I can't imagine it normally being more than 1,000 lbs per person per year. This would require anodier 114 wagon-loads on average to reach the city each day. This gives us a total of 455 wagon-loads needing to reach the city each day on average to fulfill the supply requirements. Granted this is a highly conjectural figure, and one may wonder at its worth; but, as we shall see, even if the actual requirement of supplies was an additional 100 wagons per day or more, it would have little effect on my argument.



Distribution of Supplies

As Anders points out in his article, the absence of proper artificial lighting would prevent the travel of wagons to and from the city at night. However, once inside, the inhabitants could do as the Romans did, and move goods around during all hours. (After all, the main avenue at the lowest circle was called Lampwrights' Street!)

With a 10 to 12-hour day, we have a wagon or mule train reaching the city at an average of one every one and a half to two minutes. They would also be leaving the city at the same rate. The *Minas Tirith* supplement (pg. 41, 1988 edition) depicts the Great Gate as being 40 ft wide. This would allow two-way traffic with ample room for pedestrians. Naturally, as in all cities, there would be periods of heavy traffic; but I believe that even with wagons and mule trains arriving once every 30 seconds, if the traffic were properly controlled—as it would be, due to the presence of guards—there would not be anymore of a traffic bottleneck than many of us experience daily. If any toll or customs stations were required, they could be located outside the Gate, where there would be room for needed passing lanes.

Rather major logistical difficulties would only occur if the situation were as Anders depicts in his article, with wagons having to unload outside the city gates, where goods would be loaded onto more agile carts for transport within the city. The reason for this, Anders states, is that large wagons could not navigate the tight turns and narrow tunnels present in Minas Anor.

Graham writes essentially the same thing. Perhaps, but must it be this way? Going back to an earlier point, would not the city's planners have foreseen this, and allowed for wider streets and tunnels, especially along the main thoroughfares at the lower levels? I believe the idea of not having wagons in Minas Anor originates in the passages where Gandalf and Pippin, riding upon Shadowfax, first enter the city (RotK: 23). There, it states that the people of the city seldom used horses, but could not this be interpreted that they seldom used horses as mounts? The passage also does not exclude the possible use of mule trains or ox-drawn wagons. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, later in the chapter, we have a important description of wagons—both horse and ox-drawn—leaving the city (ibid: 36).

Let us assume wagons and mule trains can enter the city. Depending on what they are carrying, each would go to a specific warehouse, business, marketplace, or residence. The efficient guild structure would work out the exact off-loading point for much of the cargo. Most likely, the vast majority of any storage areas would be at the lowest level, where property values would be least expen-

sive. Rather than one central food market, there would be several. This is what I believe Graham had in mind as well, since he indicates there are several open areas which could be used as markets, such as the "Diamond" Market on the first level (pg. 45).

This type of dispersed market system would eliminate the need for a swarm of servants descending from the upper levels to buy food. Indeed, as my chart below shows, the majority of Minas Anor's citizens lived on the first two levels. Here is where most of the markets are located, and it would be the lower classes who primarily used the open markets.

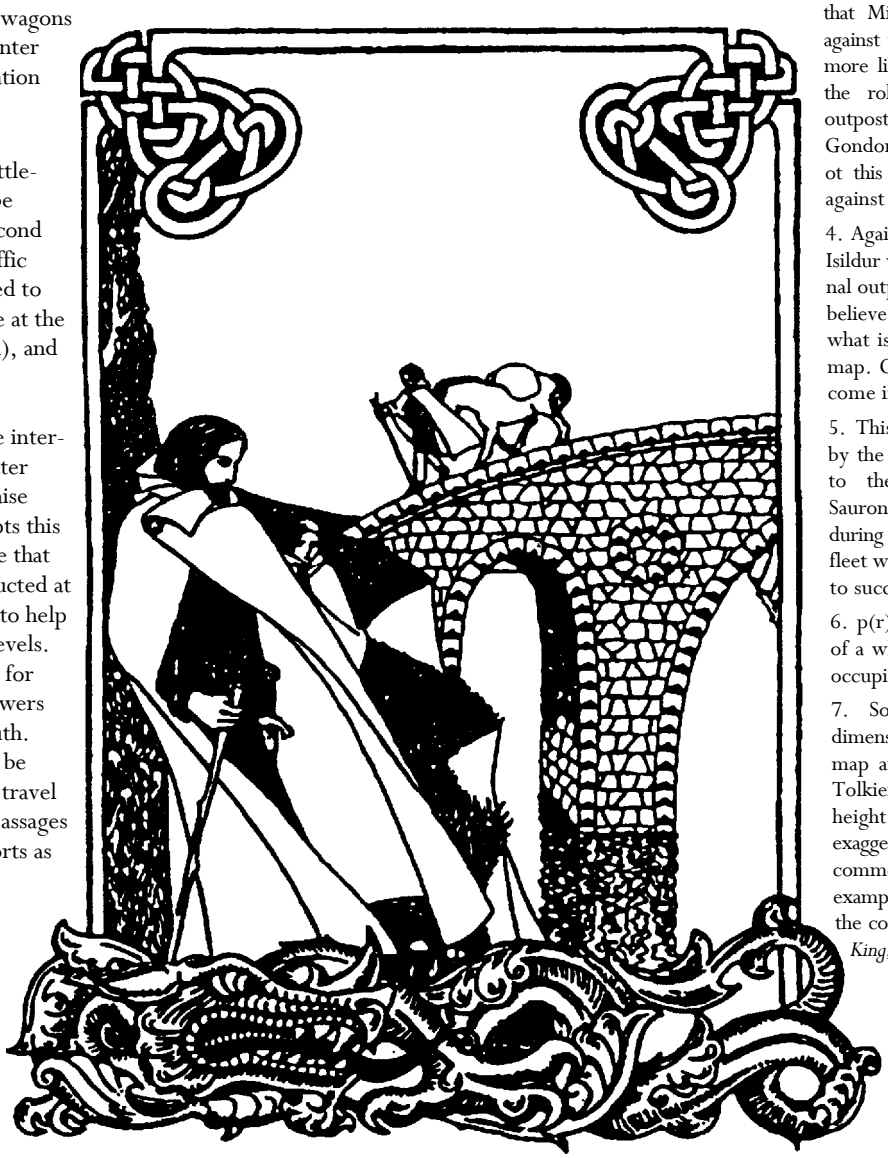
The advantage of an open marketplace is that one can quickly compare prices of several vendors, and haggle with the seller. For the more well-to-do on the upper levels, it would not be advantageous for them to send their servants on a round trip of a few miles to the lower levels to haggle with someone else's (their employers') money for food. Rather, they would just purchase the food at the nearby local grocer, paying a higher price, but saving labor costs. In essence, once you accept the idea that wagons and mule trains would enter the city, the supply situation becomes much easier to resolve.

Another potential bottleneck, however, would be between the first and second levels. By this point, traffic would already be reduced to 68% of what it would be at the Great Gate (see diagram), and able to be spread out to nighttime hours. Also, Graham's design of these inter-level gates includes a water wheel-powered lift to raise heavy loads, if one accepts this design, then it is possible that similar lifts were constructed at other inner wall towers to help get handcarts between levels. The most likely location for these would be at the towers facing due north and south. Even more likely would be staircases for pedestrian travel at these towers. These passages would double as sally ports as well.

Other ideas which would assist the situation is that the Anorians would use a technique familiar to railroaders, having "helper" horses assist in getting wagons and carts up the 10' slope Graham indicates existed at the inner gates. Anders' idea of a hoist-and-pulley system might also be used between the inner levels. Still, I believe that the vast majority of the goods could and would simply be transported by wagon or mule straight through the gates.

If one still does not like the idea of heavy wagon traffic in the city, there is another compromise solution. Tolkien writes that the lowest circle of the city was also the widest (RotK: 41). Rather than changing the scale of the map as I have suggested, to increase the size of city, let us move only the outer walls from 2,000 to 2,800 feet. If this is done, then close to 60% of the area of the city would be in the lowest level. This would reduce the need for heavy traffic beyond the first level by half.

Finally I would like to point out that the manure deposited by the large number of draft animals in the city would not simply lie where it fell and attract flies; instead, it would seriously make a valuable export commodity; traded to local farmers by the heretofore little known Muckrakers' Guild. While not powerful, the Muckrakers are a close knit group of poor but enterprising young lads, whose guild emblem I can only imagine.



FOOTNOTES

1. One could argue that their chemistry was inferior, since gunpowder was never developed, even after thousands of years, except by Saruman (and by Gandalf, with his fireworks). Perhaps this is because the laws ot chemistry differed in Arda. After all, it possessed metals unheard of in our world. Perhaps a wizard's touch was required to create a chemical explosion. Finally, of course, there is the one "science" present in Arda, but absent from our world—the science ot magic.
2. Such fortress-cities or "havens" had a long history in Arda. Graham correctly mentions that Minas Anor was modeled loosely after Gondolin, which in turn was modeled after Tirion in Valinor. Nargothrond, Eglarest, and Brithombar in Beleriand are other examples.

3. I realize that *The Silmarilhon:* 291 states that Minas Anor was built "as a shield against the wild Men of the dales." I find it more likely, however, that while this was the role of the original Númenórean outpost, the newly-exiled Kings of Gondor would not construct fortifications ot this magnitude merely for protection against the Daen-folk.

4. Again, this is a reasonable supposition. Isildur would have expanded on this original outpost; but, by the time of the war, I believe its size was not anywhere near to what is shown on that supplement's city map. Construction to that extent would come in later centuries.

5. This naval superiority had been lost by the time of the War of the Ring, due to the Corsair fleet. This allowed Sauron's army a relatively easy crossing during that conflict. It was also Castamir's fleet which allowed his siege of Osgiliath to succeed where Sauron's failed.

6. $p(r)^2$. I subtracted 1/8th of the area of a whole circle to account for the area occupied by Mt. Mindolluin.

7. Some may point out that the dimensions of Karen Wynn Fonstad's map are based on a drawing by J.R.R. Tolkien, and in proportion to the known height of the Tower of Iicthclion. Vertical exaggeration, however, is a technique common to many landscape artists. For example, in the painting by Alan Lee on the cover of my copy of *The Return of the King,* the city is higher than it is wide.

Some Brief Thoughts on Magic in Middle-earth

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Oh no, not again an article dealing with magic in Middle-earth! If this is your reaction right now, I frankly can understand it. Odds are that it is probably the single most dealt with topic in articles covering role-playing in Tolkien's world. Apart from earlier pieces in Other Hands *by Andrew McMurry[1] as well as Joseph Balderson jointly with Benjamin Gribbon,[2] and the two articles by David Wendleken[3] and Marcus Wevers[4] mentioned in one of the last issues' bibliography addendum, we meanwhile have been given another thought-piece on the same subject-matter by David Woolpy.[5]*

This count certainly is not comprehensive, but it may suffice to demonstrate that the approach followed by the *MERP* rules leaves a lot to be said. Clearly, magic in Middle-earth remains an issue not resolved to everybody's satisfaction. However, while most of the above mentioned authors probably would subscribe to the view that Tolkien actually says amazingly little about the actual working of magic, considering the frequent occasions effects of magic are referred to in his tales, hardly any effort would seem to have been undertaken so far really to look at and analyze such scanty hints as actually are given by the author, at least as far as the gaming-world is concerned. (Sorry folks, but this includes the people at ICE, I'm afraid.)

What then, does Tolkien effectively say about the way magic is used in the world created by him? A topic he deals with on a number of occasions is the opening and closing of doors or gates by magical means. When Bilbo and the Dwarves discover the side-entrance into Smaug's lair under the Lonely Mountain, there is no mention of spells or indeed of any magic practiced by someone on the spot, yet in other instances we can find more explicit reference to the actual casting of spells.[6]

For example, at the gates of Moria, Tolkien has Gandalf saying: "From the inside you may thrust them open with your hands. From the outside nothing will move them save the spell of command.…[If] I am allowed a little peace from foolish questions, I will seek for the opening words. I once knew every spell in all the tongues of Elves or Men or Orcs, that was ever used for such a purpose. I can still remember ten score of them without searching in my mind. But only a few trials, I think, will be needed; and I shall not have to call on Gimli for words of the secret dwarf-tongue that they teach to none. The opening words were Elvish, like the writing on the arch: that seems certain" (LotR I: 399).[7]

For one, it becomes clear from this quote that unlike many role-playing games would have us believe, here there is no single "open all" spell, and that the language in which the words are uttered also makes some difference as regards their functioning. Also, this is not the only occasion where we learn of the use of magic for such a purpose and of its possible side effects. Later on, after Gandalf tried to block the eastern door leading from the Chamber of Mazarbul, he gives the following account: "I could think of nothing to do but to try and put a shutting-spell on the door. I know many; but to do things of that kind rightly requires time, and even then the door can be broken by strength.…The counter spell was terrible. It nearly broke me. For an instant the door left my control and began to open! I had to speak a word of Command. That proved too great a strain. The door burst in pieces" (LotR I: 425).

Again, the shutting and opening of doors by magical means in Tolkien's world is not an easy, "low level spell" thing to do, as would be in most fantasy role-playing games. But this is not the point I am trying to make by quoting this passage; rather I would like to draw attention to the fact that now Gandalf apparently is speaking of two quite distinct concepts of magic, one of which is spells that require time and—one takes it—some kind of more or less careful preparation, while to the other, less subtle concept, Gandalf refers as the "word[s] of Command" (note the capital "C").

His notion of a "spell of command" (no capital "C") in the first quote given, however, in this respect seems somewhat confusing.

But if we venture to look at the actions subsequently taken by him while trying to open the West-gate of Moria, the actual distinction between "spells" and "words of Command" becomes somewhat more obvious: "He stepped up to the rock again, and lightly touched with his staff the silver star in the middle beneath the sign of the anvil. *Annon edhellen, edro hi ammen! Fennas nogothrim, lasto beth lammen!* he said in a commanding voice. The silver lines faded, but the blank grey stone did not stir. Many times he repeated these words in different order, or varied them. Then he tried other spells, one after another, speaking now faster and louder, now soft and slow. Then he spoke many single words of Elvish speech....Again Gandalf approached the wall, and lifting up his arms he spoke in tones of command and rising wrath. *Edro, edro!* he cried, and struck the rock with his staff. *Open, open!* he shouted, and followed it with the same command in every language that had ever been spoken in the West of Middle-earth" (LotR I: 399-400).

From this, the difference between spells and words of Command seems clear. While spells may be cast in rhyme and in a commanding voice, this does not necessarily seem to be an essential precondition for their functioning, as Gandalf at times also speaks in an low voice and utters single words, trying the vast array of spells at his disposal. Only when these fail, he in the end resolves to use a word of Command. Now we may question: why did he bother with spells then, why did he not use a word of Command in the first place? Apparently, it would seem, because he was confident that it would not require to much effort of him to open the gate. And this indeed appears to be a key factor in the use of words of Command: they require far more effort than any spell to produce comparable results; in game terms: the expenditure of a very much higher amount of magical energy by the caster.

A second factor distinguishing spells from words of Command lies in the use of magical items. When Gandalf finally took to a word of Command attempting to open the West-gate of Moria, he "struck the rock with his staff," whereas before trying his initial spell he had "lightly touched with his staff the silver star." If we may read the latter merely as an aiding gesture in focusing his spell on the site of the gate, the striking of the rock with his staff seems to be more than a mere gesture, an impression that also is furthered by Gandalf's use of his staff in confronting the Balrog at Durin's Bridge, when "crying aloud he smote the bridge before him" (LotR I: 430).

Finally there is another instance where an enchanted item is apparently used in conjunction with words of Command to "open" a gate: "Then the Black Captain rose in his stirrups and cried aloud in a dreadful voice, speaking in some forgotten tongue words of power and terror to rend both heart and stone. Thrice he cried. Thrice the great ram boomed. And suddenly upon the last stroke the Gate of Gondor broke. As if stricken by some blasting spell it burst asunder: there was a flash of scaring lightning, and the doors tumbled in riven fragments to the ground" (LotR III: 120). The mention of a "spell" here may refer to such magic as had been embedded in Grond, the great ram of Mordor, rather than to the "words of power and terror" spoken by the Lord of the Nazgûl, the description of which recalls more closely words of Command than a spell proper. To put in brief once more this basic distinction: spells mean skill, words of Command are the equivalent to brute force in magical terms.

As some game-masters now might wish to introduce the distinction between spells and words of Command outlined above into their game, how to translate all of this into game-terms? My proposal in such a case would be that if a game-master wishes to make the effects of a certain spell available by a word of Command as an alternative option, he simply should multiply the attrition value/energy costs of this spell by the spell-level plus one (i.e., times two for a first level spell, times three for a second level spell, and so on). This factor may be varied according to the game system used, in order to be kept in a reasonable relation to normal spell costs.

This way, many words of Command at first glance might seem almost unaffordable even for expert spell-casters just for the amount of energy they consume. In many game-systems, however, this may be amended by using a focus that can store, add to or multiply magical energy. Gandalf's staff or the great ram of Mordor may be understood in such a way, and introducing the concept of words of Command into your game may require redefining the role and capabilities of such foci. (E.g., in order to work in conjunction with words of Command, physical contact of the focus with the target may be required.)

Another clement to consider is casting-time. If I take a word of Command to be spoken in, say, only two seconds, and then to come into effect immediately, some spells, if cast by someone with sufficient expertise, may take scarcely longer than this to work. In such a case the game-master might want to consider doubling the time normally needed for casting a spell, or else increase casting-time by some factor he considers appropriate.

Words of Command of course, unlike spells, may not be cast in silence or merely be murmured; in order to work, they must be shouted out aloud. Also, making this option available should be thought over very well for each individual spell, as not every land of magic, by its proper nature or principles governing it, easily lends itself to be "converted" in such a manner. The concepts behind certain spells may just be to subtle too allow for this.

When Gandalf first used a spell and then a word of Command to keep the exit leading from the Chamber of Mazarbul shut, the drain of magical energy he suffered was considerably enhanced by the Balrog's counter-spell, which led to the Wizard being too weary and shaken even to illuminate the path of the Fellowship with his staff for a while. So, where conflicting spells are cast at an object simultaneously, the game-master simply may want to add to the usual expenditure of magical energy by each of the two casters the respective amount expended by his opponent. Once the casters themselvcs become aware of such a magical opposition, he even mav allow for some form of bidding, carried out openly or in secret, at his discretion. In such a case the game-master also should give the object (or person) the spells or words of Command are cast upon some structural value in relation to the conflicting energies involved, after all, the strain by conflicting words of Command in the Chamber of Mazarbul causes the door to break, a door which we may assume to have been of the best Dwarvcn workmanship! But then of course few doors can expect to have cast conflicting spells upon them by an Istar and a Balrog on a regular basis.

I hope some reader may have found my above observations useful, if not inspiring. My principal aim was to show just by a few examples that if one cares to take a thorough look at Tolkien's writings, and with just a little bit of interpretive skill, quite an unexpected lot of details on how things magical work in Middle-earth can be extracted from them. By no means do I pretend to have been exhaustive on this, rather I would like to have encouraged game-masters in particular not only to study the rules of whatever game-system they may use, but also to look at the primary sources and draw their own conclusions from what can be found there.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Developing a Magic System tor *Middle-earth Role Playing," OH* 3, Oct. 1993, p. 11-12
2. "Weaving Magical Realism through Nature," *OH* 4, Jan. 1994, p. 15-16
3. "Magic in Middle-earth," *MOTiVE* 14
4. "Magie in Mittelerde," *Windgeflüster,* Oct. 1994, p. 40-43
5. "The Unique Magic ot Middle-earth," *Grey Worlds,* vol. I, issue 3, Aug. 1994, p. 26-31
6. All quotes are form the 1981 Unwin Paperback edition.
7. Note that the notion of spells "in all the tongues of Elves or Men or Orcs" would seem to contradict a view like the one expressed by Eduardo Martínez Santamaría in his letter published in *OH* 5, who would not grant Men any spell-casting abilities.

The Power of Spells in Middle-earth

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In traditional sword and sorcery campaigns magic is the shaper of the world. For the adventurers portrayed by the gamers, spells shape tactics in combat and a roster of available spells is a prime concern of anyone planning an adventure. The most powerful magiks, logically used, can rewrite the gameworld's history. Both the D&D *and* RM *systems harbor spells that can level buildings, annihilate companies of soldiers, and wipe out villages of hapless peasants. High-level clerical spells, rather than disease and misfortune, determine who lives and dies among the wealthy and powerful.*

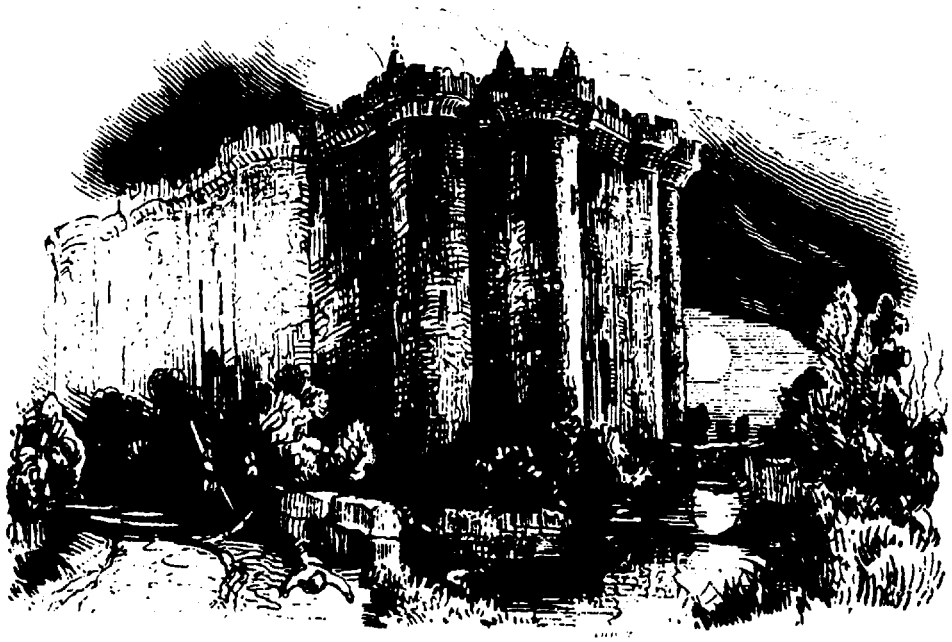
Introduction

When I decided to run my own Middle-earth campaign, my players and I had extensive experience in *D&D* and a working knowledge of *RM, Warhammer,* and many lesser known role-playing systems. All these visions of magic could be used by a rational player to create a spellcaster-dominatcd campaign. This was something I definitely wished to avoid.

Middle-earth, in spite of the best efforts of Saruman and Sauron, is not spell-dominant. In most of the dramatic scenes from Middle-earth history castable magic, as opposed to the powers of great artifacts, plays only a peripheral role. Mighty kings live their lives without being dependent on high level wizards and priests for their health and survival. Messages arce for the most part, carried by riders and walkers; battles are resolved by swords, hammers, axes, bows, and lances.

To preserve the "personality" of Tolkien in my Middle-earth campaign with a minimum of confusion and fuss I "interpreted" the spells from *RM* (and *MERP,* its simpler cousin) in a very conservative fashion. Where I considered spells unusable in their original form, I weakened them in ways requiring a minimal amount of bookkeeping, often only by shortening ranges and durations. Spell casters in my campaign still carry a tremendous amount of fire-power for direct use, but they find that many magical "short cuts" common in *D&D/RM* campaigns do not work dependably here. The physical and mental skills of characters are just as important, and players adjust their tactical style accordingly.

The unifying principle of my spell interpretations is that magic (or "power," or "essence") is not, in the later days of Middle-earth, reliably capable of creating and acting. Instead, it is used to bind and aid. A sword conjured out of the air would be a weak and undependable thing, while a sword forged and inscribed with runes of power can slay the most powerful of beings. Similarly, a conjured stone wall crumbles readily and quickly, while a rampart laid with skill, good stone, and Dwarvcn chants of binding can stand against armies and the worst trembling of earth. All the judgments made below, and any others made by any Middle-earth gamemaster, should tend toward this principle. The players are thus encouraged to use all the skills of all in their company in their adventurers.



SPELLS JUDGED BY CATEGORY

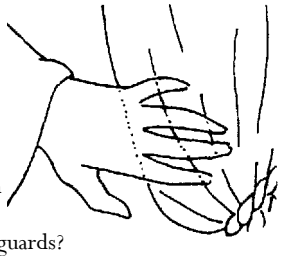
Fly and Levitate

Why storm the ramparts when you can soar over them? Why climb mountains when flying across them is quicker and safer? To keep flying spells manageable, I interpret them as unreliable in two important ways:

—Flight and levitation depend entirely on the spellcaster's concentration for control; neither provides stability or strength. It the caster tries any spell while in flight and gets a result of "fumble" or "failure" the fly is instantly dispelled; even if the caster is protected against a fumble (Gandalf and Saruman are both so protected) the spell is still lost after a bad roll. Whatever the spell's listed duration, it dissipates after one rd/level of concentration; that is, actual movement.

—Because the fly spell is derived from magical energies (no wings) any strong breeze can blow a flyer off course. The GM should judge local wind speed and turbulence and make appropriate judgments each round, visualizing the flyer as having the airworthiness of a box kite. Any effective weapon or spell attack on the flyer (crit, stun, fear, etc.) tends to de-stabilize him. The resulting uncontrollable tumble generates 30' of random drift and an A unbalancing critical each round, damage applying only if the flyer strikes an obstacle or the ground. To avoid tumbling, the flyer must make a standard Medium maneuver check, adding his intelligence bonus, subtracting the amount of base damage from the hit, multiplying the damage by the level of any critical inflicted. The caster needs to make another maneuver roll each round after that to stabilize himself.

Invisibility



One of the most used and abused spells in role-playing. Why plan your spying missions, or hire a thief, when you can turn invisible and walk right past the guards? There are three types of invisibility used in *RM* and *D&D):* camouflage, illusion, and etherealness. Each has its own weaknesses and penalties. Camouflage is caused by an aura or covering that magically blends into the character's surroundings. It typically functions only when the wearer is stationary or moving very slowly. If a covering such as a cloak as involved, the wearer suffers from restricted vision (halved perception), as he is wrapped in the covering and peering out through some narrow gap.

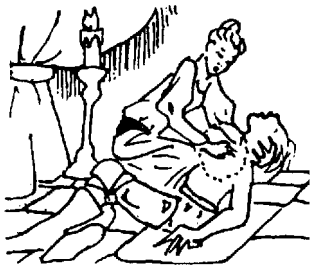
Invisibility spells are illusions. They create a magical aura that translates light around the object/creature involved. The invisible creature is totally enveloped in the spell. Its vision is so reduced that it can make out only the most blurred of images at distances of more than 10' (-80 to perception). Whatever the general duration given for an invisibility spell, it lasts no more than one round per level *(D&D* or *RM)* once the object/target moves or is moved from its original location.

The standard effect of invisibility is a -100 to all detection rolls for the object/creature involved if the detection is based primarily on the sense of sight. It affects other senses only when the detecting creature might ignore them if his eyes are not confirming the data. It the creature is detected, attacks against him are still made at -50, as noted in the Detect Invisibility spell.

Etherealness is the invisibility caused by the great Rings of Power in Middle-earth. Etherealncss puts the wearer partially into the realm of shadow, in Middle-earth, or in the Ethereal Plane, in *D&D* and most other systems. There is a general blurring of the senses with etherealness (halve perception; see Sam's experience in *LotR* III) and the danger of encountering ethereal undead or other deadly creatures (GM's choice).

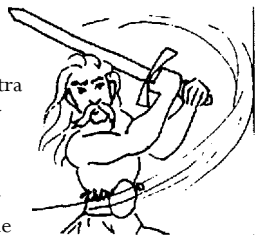
Raise Dead, Lifegiving, and similar spells

Whenever these powerful magiks are used, knowledgeable NPCs regard the situation with the greatest seriousness.



There is always a price to be paid (it is never a purely cash transaction) and the person raised must be well-considered. In Middle-earth, Lifegiving is a gift given only to a few select individuals (such as Gandalf) and most people are unaware that it even exists as a distinct spell. If a spell of this sort used without deitic authority, and particularly if some form of preservation is not used to maintain the freshness of the body, it will have a most loathsome effect. The revenant so created might despise and plot to destroy its summoner.

Haste, Speed



These acceleration magiks do not give extra spells or attacks. They are dispelled by any critical strike on the hasted creature. Their basic effect is to double normal movement and increase the creature's MM, DB, and OB by an amount equal to the spell's level. In *RM/MERP,* spellcasting and missile fire are normally judged as simultaneous within their respective segments; if a character is hasted these actions are judged by the (enhanced) MM with regard to that character only.

Food and Wat Production, Create Food and Water, Nutrient Conjures

In the long term, characters should have to forage, hunt, and bargain for their sustenance. On food: emphasize that the this is not "natural" food. While it is nutritious, it is drawn from local organic matter and does not have to look appetizing. This spell cast around wild grains produces something like bread, but if cast in a barnyard….In barren areas, such as in deserts or caves, food output is reduced. Constant sequential use of a nutrient spell also results in diminished effect, typically a fall of 10% per day in effectiveness. Abuse has unpleasant side effects, including addiction, a loathing for normal food, and magical mutation. The Middle-earth spell Nutrient Conjures, if not used in conjunction with natural ingredients baked in a specially prepared oven, also suffers the effects noted above.

On water: This also suffers from reduced effect with repetition and when used in desiccated terrain. The caster must draw some water from his own substance, resulting in the loss of 1-10 points from the Constitution stat with each casting after the first.

Elemental Spells

In *RM/MERP,* this means ball and bolt spells, along with the "wall" spells involving conjured energy. In *D&D,* a raft of spells of this sort exist, including some of the most decisive in the game. For the most part, *RM* spells have a smaller area of effect and generally are not overwhelming in combat. Any platoon of Orcs caught by a *RM* Cold Ball will take casualties, but most will survive the blast. If the spell succeeds in breaking their attack, it will be primarily because of morale failure. In *D&D,* on the other hand, the elemental spells have absolutely devastating effects on soldiers and battles. Most of them can slaughter Men and Orcs in droves; any spellcaster of quality can dominate a *D&D* battlefield. If both sides have wizards in their ranks, the combat usually ends with few survivors on either side.

Dampening the effects of *D&D* elemental spells is a daunting task, particularly when the

GM is threatened with harm by players used to cleaning out entire rooms of monsters with a fireball. However, the following suggestions are offered; note that I have tested none of them:

1) A + 4 is added to the saving throw of anyone not at the center of an elemental spell attack.

2) A saving throw is allowed against all elemental attacks. A creature making its saving throw can take no more than 1/2 its current hit points in damage from the attack.

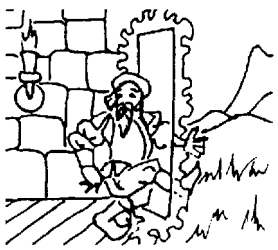
3) To be reduced below one hit point by a single round's exchange of elemental attacks, a creature affected must have failed its saving throw and rolled an unmodified ("natural") ten or less on its saving throw die. This rule does not apply to any creature already below 50% of its base hit points at the time of attack.

Death Spells, Clouds, Gas spells, and Similar Mass Attacks

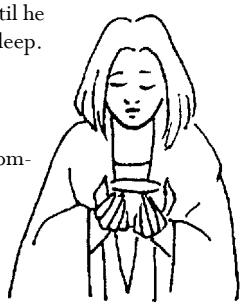
The more lethal of these spells can slay the garrison of a castle with a wave of a conjurer's hand. The most extreme I've seen was in *Warhammer,* where one necromantic spell was mathematically capable of exterminating every living creature in a 1/4 mile radius. The GM was left to explain why the hideous demons who knew this spell did not use it to wipe all of Mankind.

Death spells are useful primarily in keeping gaming sessions from bogging down; most players avoid the labor of cutting down a mob of opponents one die roll at a time. Applying the rules noted above under elemental magic could alleviate the problem. The GM may also wish to reduce the area of effects to the equivalent of a single room.

Teleport, Dimension Door, Long Door



This spell is typically used in Middle-earth only between certain fixed locations, from structures built using magiks from the First Age. There are some rare items and creatures capable of true teleportation. Even in the First Age, most rational spellcasters shunned teleport magic, as it involves a moment of non-existence and passage through alternate dimensions. Any fumble could render this non-existence permanent (resist a 50th level attack) and the caster's body could arrive at his destination without its soul or containing the spirit of some being from beyond the Pale. Most older spellcasters, even those with the Lofty Bridge list, have never learned the teleportation spells and know only horror stories concerning them. Only one Leaving, Long Door, or Dimension Door is possible per day per spellcaster in Middle-earth. It leaves the caster sick and exhausted (80% of normal Constitution) until he has gotten a full night's sleep.

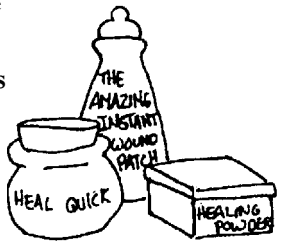


Scrying Spells

This includes Detect, Analysis, Assessment, Commune, Delving, Finding, Know, Locate, Lore, Tale, and similar informational magiks. The principle here should be that these spells seldom present a clear vision. Further, any creature, especially one trying to hide or remain hidden, has an inherent resistance to magical scrying. Any spell that violates a creature's body aura, to read its intentions, alignment, or nature, is automatically resisted by the target. Resistance by +20 (*RM*) results in some awareness of the scrying. Spells that read past events, such as Path Tales or Stone Tell, are judged as though any creatures being traced were living and resistant; judge the aura by the attitude of the creature who left it as evidence.

Detection magics give only a general reading of the auras they sense. It is not normally possible to hide the concentration and gestures necessary to make these spells work. Most beings resent being scried, even for peaceful purposes; sentient beings often take aggressive action to prevent it.

Healing spells



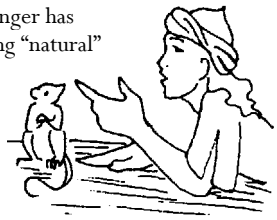
PCs can become addicted to these magiks, regarding them as the normal and routine way to deal with wounds. To maintain some verisimilitude, the GM should dramatize the process and emphasis, whenever possible, how "unnatural" this process is. Some suggestions:

Side effects. Intense pain from a wound that knits in seconds instead of hours; residual itching and aches for days after. Characters have to check will-power to take their cures silently; passersby faint at the sound of bones snapping back into place. Recreational activities after the adventure are compromised by creaking muscles and exhaustion.

Permanent scarring. Something common with severe injuries, aggravated here by the "quick fix" of magical healing. Example: a fighter is struck in the heart and is saved from death by a magical salve, directly applied by a quick-thinking companion who thrusts her hand deep into a tangle of shattered ribs and muscle. The cure works, but leaves behind a permanent heart murmur, the character never regaining his full endurance. Another example: a wizard has a pipe imbedded in his chest after a misfired teleport spell drops him into the midst of a basement heating system. He is saved, but carries a twelve-inch circular scar across his front and back for the rest of his life. In addition, he congests easily and periodically coughs up small chunks of lead and asbestos.

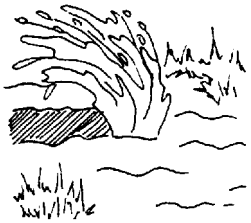
Emotional scarring. Anything from "hangovers" from severe curatives to permanent twitches and crankiness. Characters become moody, suffer from nightmares, nervousness, and drinking binges.

Mundane prejudice. Folk dependent on "trick" healing are regarded with suspicion and even contempt. Powerful healers refuse spells when danger has passed, recommending "natural" healing as better for the body and spirit.



Speak with Animals, Animal Tongues, Speak with Plants, Speak with Monsters

Contrary to the common superstitions, most animal species do not have real languages as we understand them. Such information that they can convey, such as sounds, gestures, and "feelings," are interpreted through the spell. While the caster is very likely to understand this information and express it to his comrades in linguistic terms, the entities contacted are going to sound very stupid. Most have limited powers of observation, a minimal and simplistic long term memory, and little or no future tense. If a character tracking a band of Easterling raiders took up conversation with a hawk, tor instance, the bird would register the bandits as little more than another group of herd animals, barely noting the differences between the bipeds and quadrupeds. If the band had a permanent camp, scouting its perimeter for mice might be part of the hunting bird's routine. If asked to fly up and reconnoiter, it would likely return with a report on rabbit and grouse lurking nearby.



Barrier Pit and Dig

Not a troublesome spell, unless the caster tries to warp it to destroy mud or clay walls. Dig works only on a horizontal surface. Any sort of blessing or magical protection in the material reduces the effects of this spell by an order of magnitude. This is not a disintegration; a spell of this sort takes a full round to dig its pit and the geyser of material it raises is spectacular to watch and hear. For the *RM* spell, anyone in the area of effect must make an RR or take an "A" Unbalancing crit as they scramble

clear. Anyone failing the save by 50 or more sinks to the bottom and take a "B" crit. All involved will come out dirty and coughing.

Weather Summoning and Control

Anyone with a reasonable interest in observing the weather, which includes all peasant farmers, has a chance of noting the unusual warping of local weather rhythms. Calling rain, for instance, creates a narrow "pillar" of cloud and rain visible for miles.

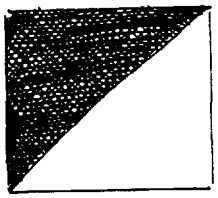
Polymorph, Change of Kind, Alter Self, Shapechange

The GM must avoid allowing too great a range of size or skill to the person using this sort of spell. A magician taking the form of an elemental, for instance, could move about after their fashion: walking, flying, swimming, but would not have the supernatural strength associated with these beings. Taking on the form of another humanoid does not give the caster their form of speech, body language, or skills. Usage of this sort of spell can have severe social implications, as no one trusts a shapechanger. Reactions might range from simple leeriness to attempted lynching, depending on the people involved.

Item Lore and other Lore and Analysis magic

Most of these spells are tapping deep within the caster's own memory and intellect. If the caster has absolutely no thread of lore on which to make a judgment the spell cannot function. Even if the spell has a means of drawing information by supernatural means, it functions better after the caster has researched and gathered information by mundane means.

Light, Utterlight, Darkness, Utterdark



No light spell is permanent in Middle-earth. The light generated by a spell radiates softly from a 1' diameter globe centered on the caster's target. It produces shadows as any other light source, though weaker than most. Magical darkness is not broadcast from a point, but is a negation of light through the area of effect. Unlike the light spell, it is not mobile. Note that the darkness produced is never undetectable outdoors or in except in absolute natural darkness. On a moonlit night, it can be quite conspicuous.

Wall of Stone, Wall of Ice, Earthwall, Earth/Stone

All wall spells must be cast in a "standing" position and with appropriate support—a solid floor, at least—or they will crumble as they are conjured. They cannot be cast to "embed" living creatures. If cast into a crowd or at a stationary creature, the spell will crumble as it is summoned. Walls conjured out of pure magical energy crumble/evaporate back into it after one/rd per level of casting. Walls of earth are drawn from the surrounding terrain, with the appropriate noise and flying debris; the wall erodes and crumbles away in a few days, at most. Note that the binding magic in Rock to Mud, Mud to Rock, Earth/Mud, and Earth/ Stone works similarly to that of walls. These spells can fail in similar ways.

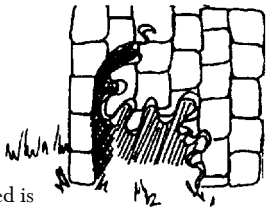
Illusions and related spells

Remember that you are creating only an image of some creature or object. Illusions manipulated to cause direct damage can typically do no more than twice their level in concussion damage and a single "A" crit. A resistance roll is allowed if there is anything remotely suspicious about the created image. There is + 20 bonus if the character knows (or thinks he knows) there is an illusion present. Remember, logic is the great enemy of illusions; it can be used to justify additional resistance rolls. If a character sees through an illusion, it becomes translucent to him. It may inhibit his vision slightly but has no other effect.

Language Lore, Tongues, Comprehend Languages

These spells tap the caster's own memory and intellect. If the caster has absolutely no thread of lore on which to judge the speech or text involved the spell cannot function. Spells used in direct conversation offer no more than rudimentary communication (MERP level 2, RM level 4) and are quite conspicuous in action. True interpretation requires knowledge of a foreign culture, its habits and history.

Portal and Passwall



Most magically protected buildings resist spells of this sort. The portal created is scmi-ethereal and does not damage the targeted wall. Only living creatures may pass through it.

Summons, Monster Summoning, Animal Summoning

Unless noted otherwise, these creatures are of magical substance, formed around a conjured spirit. Helplessness or unconsciousness caused by wounds results in the dissipation of the creature.

Notes On Spell Use

The spells and magic items used by the various beings and monsters should reflect some physical or mental/emotional inclination or limitation. These reflect common sense in most areas: fire elementals do not cast water bolts, demons cannot touch holy swords, and so on. Spell use should also reflect individual personalities or racial prejudices and dignity. The Faerie creatures described in my Arnor and Shire modules have extensive spell-casting powers, but do not use them; most never look at their problems in ways any mortal wizard would consider logical.

Elrond does not summon demons, evil clerics seldom learn healing spells—or if they do, they do not admit to their followers that they have them. Orcs avoid Elvish swords, while a Dúnadan would not deliberately carry Hobbit-sized bows and shields. Saruman has a very strong sense of his own dignity (Gandalf only slightly less so) and is loathe to cast spells that reduce it: he would be unlikely, for instance, to cast a fly spell in a strong wind, and would be repelled by the notion of polymorphing into a female Hobbit with a runny nose just to gain information.

As a final note, always remember that most beings in Middle-earth are not familiar with spells and magic. Many would react with fear or anger the first time a lightning bolt went off around them, even if it were cast by an ally or friend. The wise spellcaster restrains himself when appropriate -casting healing spells in private for instance—and plays upon his opponents' ignorance and superstition whenever possible. An Orc who runs in fear from a flash of light is as defeated as one burned by a firebolt. Clever gameplaying of this sort can gain a magician or animist far more success than the strength of his spells could ever provide.

SCENARIO: THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

Magnus Seter
Krokgatan 14, 784-52
Borlänge, Sweden

Not all noblemen in Harithilien are loyal to their King. This is made evident for the PCs as they encounter one of the King's tax administrators, murdered by unknown perpetrators. The PCs acquire information that can prove the downfall of the local land-owner, or a reward for the silence of the PCs.

This short adventure provides the PCs with an opportunity to make friends among the commoners of Harithilien. It also offers a chance to join the forces of an aristocratic villain, and thereby gain a direct entry to the intrigue and dealings of the nobles of Harithilien. The adventure contains only four basic encounters. It serves best as a short episode to round off a gaming session or to provide some flavor to an otherwise uninteresting journey.

However, the adventure's background provides the Gamemaster with several options as to how to continue a campaign. The events will spark off other adventures and it is up to the Gamemaster to use the opportunities offered as the beginnings of other adventures. (The adventure is not tied to a certain geographic location and can be used in any place the Gamemaster wishes.)

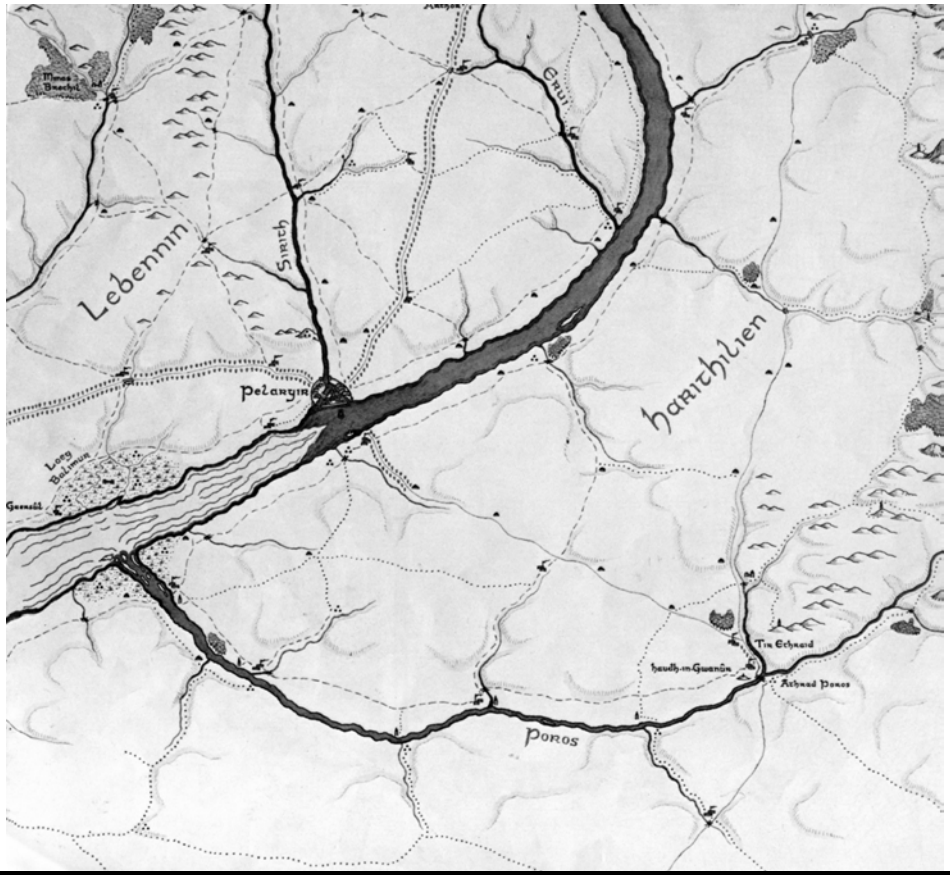
A TALE OF TERROR AND TAXES

When Dorlas of the House of Mírduin left his estate to his eldest son Handir, the family possessed moderate wealth. They were able to provide for themselves and even have some large feasts arranged during the year. They were not rich, but they managed.

But Handir was not content. His father had sent him to Minas Anor for an education, and there he had acquired expensive habits. As he returned to the family estate, he found the ways of his father too simple for his own taste. But there was nothing he could do but wait. He tried to continue his extravagant life and often traveled to Minas Anor to visit his friends and spend the money he was given by his father for his upkeep.

Ten years ago the old man finally left this world. Handir felt strangely sad, for even though he felt that his father was a cheap fool, he still remembered him as a loving father. But the feeling soon passed. Handir obtained control over the estate and he started changing the routines, slowly at first, but after three years his mother followed her husband to the grave, and there was no one to stop him. His brother Beren tried talking some sense into Handir, but when his efforts became too bothersome, Handir locked him up in the attic of the estate, claiming that he had become insane by the death of their mother. No servants were allowed into the attic and those who objected soon lost their jobs or even worse, disappeared.

The changes made by Handir brought in more money to his coffers, money he soon spent on feasts and extravagant trips to Minas Anor and Pelargir. His already expensive tastes became even more refined and he craved for more and more money. So he taxed the locals even harder. They were forced to work from dawn till dusk with little compensation. Their livestock was taken from them and their houses ransacked for hidden treasures.



But even this was not enough for Handir. It was then that he turned from being only a spoiled and tyrannical landowner to being a criminal. The idea was simple: if he could manipulate the tax assessor or the accounting books, he could get away with paying only a fifth of the taxes levied on his land. This would give him more than enough money to continue his life in luxury. And so his plans were executed.

At first it seemed as if everything would go unnoticed. But the peasants that paid tribute to the House of Mírduin soon felt that something was amiss, something they could use to change their own squalid situation. Risking their lives, they spied on Handir when he had his dealings with the tax-collector. They soon learned of the scam, although the tax assessor was ignorant of the fact. As the assessor left the estate, he was stopped by the peasants and taken to the nearby farms. He learned of the high taxes the peasants paid—taxes that did not reach the King. In fury he returned to the manor.

There the assessor was greeted with surprise by Handir who had believed himself safe for another year. Handir was even more surprised when the assessor demanded to see the correct books, and get the tax money that were due to the King. Using his guards, the assessor forced his way into the Mírduin treasury and there he found more money than he could ever have expected. He also found the correct books. Seizing these, he turned to Handir and informed him that he would return to the Steward of Ithilien and report the crime. Meanwhile, Handir was to wait at the estate for the militia, as an honorable nobleman would. Believing this to be sufficient measures, the assessor rode out through the gates.

But he had underestimated the power of money and luxury. As long as the assessor had been at the estate, Handir had not dared to lay a hand on him. But as the official left the estate, plans were forming in Handir's mind. He picked ten of his most loyal henchmen and garbed them as brigands. They left the estate in haste and secrecy.

Handir's men rode hard and soon they saw the coach and horses of the official group. Knowing the land they soon found a suitable place for an ambush. There they lay in wait. As the assessor's small party reached the ambush spot, they were quickly surprised and a battle ensued. The assessor and his men were slain, but they took six of Handir's henchmen with them.

When the adventure starts the henchmen are searching the coach for the books and any other valuables they might find. The adventurers notice that henchmen torch a coach. The leader carries the valuable books and is about to put them in his saddle-bags. Then one of the henchmen discovers the PCs. As they are unwanted witnesses, the henchmen will attack, trying to kill or capture them.

When the PCs have defeated the henchmen, they will find the books and a chest full with money. The chest is closed with a wax-seal, showing the device of the Steward of Ithilien. As they stand amidst the rubble of the battle they hear the sound of approaching horses.

After the henchmen left, Handir discovered that some of the peasants were spying on him. Even though the spies escaped, Handir understood that speed was of the essence. To assure the capture of the books he dispatched his steward and four of his best men to aid the previous force. These did not have time to disguise themselves and are therefore still carrying the uniform of the House of Mírduin.

In the ensuing confrontation the PCs will be ordered to return the books to the rightful owner, in this case Handir.

Then suddenly another group will enter the scene. A small band of peasants have discovered the situation and will charge into the clearing. They will try to persuade the PCs not to give the book to Handir's henchmen and will tell horrid tales of his evil ways. If the PCs believe the peasants and refuse to give the book to Handir, another battle will ensue. From this battle the PCs will hopefully emerge victorious.

After this they will learn of the last remaining member of the House of Mírduin, Handir's younger brother. He is still locked up in the estate and the PCs are asked by the peasants to rescue him, and defeat the evil landowner.

Two Sides of the Coin

If the PCs chose to deliver the books to Handir, they will be rewarded. He will then question the PCs to find out if they can be of any use to him. If Handir feels that the PCs can be trusted or controlled, he will offer them the places of the henchmen that were killed in the ambush.

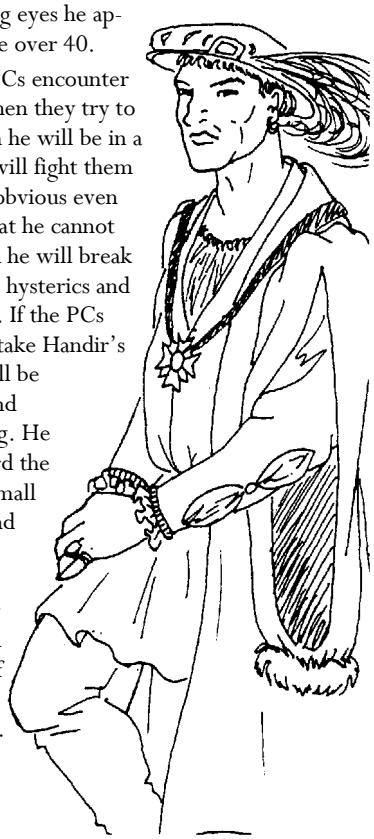
The PCs will be used for various dirty operations and will become closely involved in Handir's schemes designed to get him more money. The PCs will receive fair payment, but their hands will be stained by blood. First, Handir will want them to find out and eliminate those peasants who tipped off the assessor. Handir will also want to present his version of the ambush to the King's steward. The PCs will accompany him to the court to present the gruesome tale of brigands and murder. There the PCs will be caught up in the struggle between those who suspect Handir and those who defend him.

If the PCs defeat Handir and release his brother, he will resume control over the estate. The heavy taxes will be removed and money will be redistributed among the peasants. A full report of the situation will be sent to the Steward of Ithilien and the actions of the PCs will be mentioned. They will be offered work by the new head of the House of Mírduin. Again the PCs will be caught in-between warring factions: on one side those who want to take away the estate from the House of Mírduin and on the other those mat want Beren to continue as lord of the manor. Whatever side the PCs choose to join there will be plenty of adventure ahead of them.

Handir

Handir is not evil in a Sauronic sense, merely greedy and unscrupulous, and ensnared by the circumstances. If one would call him evil, he would be genuinely surprised. He justifies his actions by claiming that he is merely exercising the traditional rights of a Harithilien nobleman.

Handir is of average height for a Dúnadan, of medium build, and lacks any distinguishing features. This is made up by his clothing, which is extravagant, to say the least. He wears expensive baubles and cheap jewelry, and is fond of decorating his hats with various colorful feathers. His belt and scabbard are gold-embroidered. His face is weak, and lined with troubles. The eyes are tired and he is prone to slouching, when not in the presence of other nobles or people he wishes to impress. All these traits belie his true age, which is only 30, to unknowing eyes he appears to be over 40.



If the PCs encounter Handir when they try to free Beren he will be in a rage. He will fight them until it is obvious even for him that he cannot win. Then he will break down into hysterics and surrender. If the PCs decide to take Handir's side he will be friendly and welcoming. He will reward the PCs in a small manner and try to win their confidence by putting on a facade of friendship.

Beren

Beren is Handir's unfortunate brother. He has been locked up by his sibling to prevent im from convincing the servants and peasants to turn against the lord of the manor.

As his brother, Beren is an unremarkable person. He is somewhat shorter, but has the same tired features, albeit for other reasons. He is 28 years old and a man of simple taste. He often wears comfortable and unremarkable clothes of the same materials as his servants. He despises jewelry and other trinkets.

Beren is a competent man, well educated in running a large estate. He has worked in the fields during the harvests and has come to know and respect the common people. He is resourceful and used to taking initiative, but he is also acutely aware of his brother's rights as the first-born of the family. This is the only fact that has made him accept his situation.

He will only encounter the PCs if they release him from his prison. He will be reserved until the situation is made clear. He will then take command over the manor. He will express gratitude to the PCs but will not allow them to administer matters. This is a task reserved for the head of the family, and after the disgrace or death of Handir this means Beren.

The Henchmen

Handir's henchmen arc not unlike any other band of brigands encountered on the road. They were in fact recruited from various parts of Gondor and many of them have a questionable background. They are loyal to Handir for as long as they are paid. This loyalty is a frail thing indeed, and if their lives would be threatened, they would not hesitate to desert their employer. It is important for the Gamemastcr to bear this in mind. The henchmen will only attack and keep on fighting, if they've got a clear advantage and arc certain of winning. If they are met with staunch opposition they are likely to break and flee the combat.

The Peasants

The peasants are the real victims of this tale. They are heavily taxed and suffer hardship after hardship. This has made them desperate and they are now looking for a way to get rid of their tyrant without resorting to violence. The peasants know that if they can prove the unjust treatment, there will probably be a change in administration. The problem is to gather enough evidence; they know that their own words carry far less weight that those of a nobleman.

To find the chink in Handir's armor, the peasants have organized a small group of spies to keep a watchful eye on Handir and all his doings, in the hope of finding evidence that can be used in a court. Now it seems as if the time is finally at hand.

The peasants are simple of ways and education. They are honest and with no ill intent. Their situation is now so bad that it simply cannot get much worse. They are desperate but will only resort to violence in the most extreme situations, knowing that by doing so they may condemn themselves to a life as outlaws. Then their families would surely be destroyed.

The Ambush

The ambush takes place along the road in a small valley. The road runs along its bottom and the ridges arc topped by small trees and bushes. Large rocks arc scattered on the side of the road. It is possible for several persons to hide in the bushes running along the ridges, and still have clear sight of what is happening on the road. It will take a running person three rounds to traverse the distance between the ridge and the middle of the road. Any person doing so will be discovered by those standing by the coach during the second round.

The Mírduin Estate

The Mírduin estate is made up of several smaller buildings surrounding the large manor, housing the family and their most trusted servants. The other houses include the servants' quarters, the stables, and the guardhouse. The estate has been refurbished by Handir over the last few years and many changes have been made. The core of the house was built some hundred years before the Kin-strife, and is akin to many other structures around Harithilien.

Handir has also redesigned the park that surrounds the manor. It now includes a maze and several sculpted bushes, as well as a fountain. Small paths strewn with gravel wind through it, passing small statues of questionable quality.

The House of Mírduin has dwindled to Handir and Beren. In addition, many servants live here but they will not take part in any action during the adventure. Only if Handir's life is threatened, three young stable boys will try to rescue him.

Handir's henchmen live in the guardhouse. In total, Handir has hired fifteen men, but six have died in the ambush at the beginning of this adventure. Four will be encountered by the PCs at the ambush spot. That leaves five to guard the estate. Two of these accompany Handir and the other three rest in the guardhouse. They will react as soon as the alarm is raised.

Starting the Characters

The adventure starts as the PCs are traveling in the countryside. They hear distant screams of anguish, abruptly interrupted and a pillar of smoke rises through the air. As the PCs close in they will hear the raucous laughter of the henchmen, and the sound of frightened horses.

After a while the PCs will be aided in their dilemma by the peasants bursting in on the scene. This will give them clues as to what is really going on and help them make their decision. The obstacles presented in this adventure are few, but potentially lethal. The PCs will fight the nine remaining henchmen and finally Handir himself. Apart from these opponents the only obstacles will be the occasional servant at the estate and the locked door to the attic, where Beren is kept.

If the PCs bring back the books to Handir, he will pay them the moderate sum of silver, in the hope of keeping them happy. He will not pay anything else unless the PCs enlist in his service. If the PCs free Beren, he will offer them free food and board for as long as they wish plus a gift of one riding horse to each. If they are competent, he will consider hiring them. The peasants profess eternal gratitude to the PCs and offer them food and lodging whenever they should need so. A small feast will be held in their honor.

Reaching the Ambush

When the PCs discover the ambush they will see the burning coach standing in the middle of the small valley. The coach is surrounded by eleven corpses, all slain by sword-thrusts or slashes. The corpse of the assessor is dressed in costly civilian clothing while his four guards wear the colors of die Steward of Ithilien. The six remaining ones are dressed in non-descript tunics and hoods. In the valley are also the four horses that pulled the coach.

Around the coach, three men move through the smoke. They are dressed as brigands and search through the rubble left from

the coach. They have already salvaged a chest and a couple of books. The books are plainly in view on top of the chest.

As the PCs survey the scene, the bandit leader takes the books and loads these into his saddle-bags. He barks a few orders to his men who will start dragging their companions' corpses towards the ridge-in fact, towards the place where the PCs are hiding!

At the same time, the PCs hear a gasp of surprise from behind them. The henchman left to tend the horses is returning for further orders (without the horses) and stumbles on the PCs. He instantly yells for his friends who drop their heavy loads and charge up the hill. Unless the PCs cut down the henchman that discovered them and escape, they will be locked in combat.

The henchmen will only continue to fight as long as they are certain of victory. If the PCs outnumber them or are obviously skilled warriors (distinguished by heavy armor and competently wielded weapons), the henchmen will flee.

As the battle is resolved, the PCs will be left alone on the scene of the carnage. The few surviving henchmen will leave their loot and escape on their horses. They will not return to the Mírduin estate as they are well aware of the fact that the walls are coming down around Handir.

The Chatelaine Arrives

When the PCs have surveyed the wreckage and found the assessor's books, they hear the sound of approaching horses. Another of Handir's groups appears around a bend in the road. The group of four is led by the senior officer of Handir's henchmen, commonly known as the chatelaine.

As soon as they realize that the forms moving in the smoke are not their companions, they stop. The four men confer hastily and point and gesture towards the PCs. Then they approach.

The chatelaine will haughtily demand that the PCs explain their presence. He will act surprised as the PCs mention the brigands' ambush, but it is only a facade. When the PCs have had time to explain, the chatelaine cuts them off and demands that they give the books and the chest to him and then depart from the estate.

The Peasants' Pleas

As the PCs have reached an impasse with the chatelaine, a group of peasants suddenly charge out of the bushes on the left ridge. They are dearly agitated and plead with the PCs not to give in to the tyrant's servants. The chatelaine is clearly frustrated by this and threatens the peasants while his men rattle their weapons.

If the PCs listen to the peasants, they will explain the situation as well as they are able to. They are clearly upset and frustrated but they will try to convince the PCs of the righteousness of their cause. The chatelaine soon grows tired of the confusion. If he and his men outnumber the PCs or if they can be expected to win a fight, they will attack. If they are clearly outnumbered or faced with fearsome opponents, they will simply retreat and leave the area. They are mercenaries and can see a bad thing coming. When the henchmen are defeated or after they depart, the peasants will tell the PCs of Beren and implore them to free him, hoping that this will set things right again.

Reaching the Estate

As the PCs reach the estate they will be met by little opposition. The servants regard them with suspicion and, if the PCs' clothes are blood-stained, they will retreat in fear. If the PCs approach the estate openly, they encounter Handir and his remaining soldiers at the doors of the manor. He demands an explanation for their behavior. If he is informed of the ambush, he will pretend surprise. He then demands that the books be returned to him. If he is confronted with the peasants' accusations, he will laugh and claim that they are peasants and hence not to be trusted.

If the PCs refuse to hand over the books, Handir will become so enraged that he attacks them, single-handedly if necessary. His guards will leave him if faced with too tough an opposition. After defeating Handir, the PCs may free Beren from the attic. He will then assume control over the situation. How to handle this is detailed above.

All That Glitters

Anders Blixt:
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This campaign deals with a gold-rush located in the Harondorian foothills of Ephel Dúath. The introduction outlines the general background, followed by adventures dealing with specific situations. For a temporal setting, the Gamemaster may choose any date between 1641 (just after Adûnaphel's departure from Lugarlûr) and 1944 (before the upheavals caused by the Second Wainrider War depopulate Harondor).

It is also possible to relocate the campaign to other uncivilized Gondorian mountain areas: the Anfalas or Drúwaith Iaur foothills of western Ered Nimrais or the Misty Mountains of Enedhwaith. However, the Gamemaster must then substitute the Urdwan (Southron) locals with the relevant natives (usually Daen tribes) and modify several other details of the text.

The Malduin Gold-rush

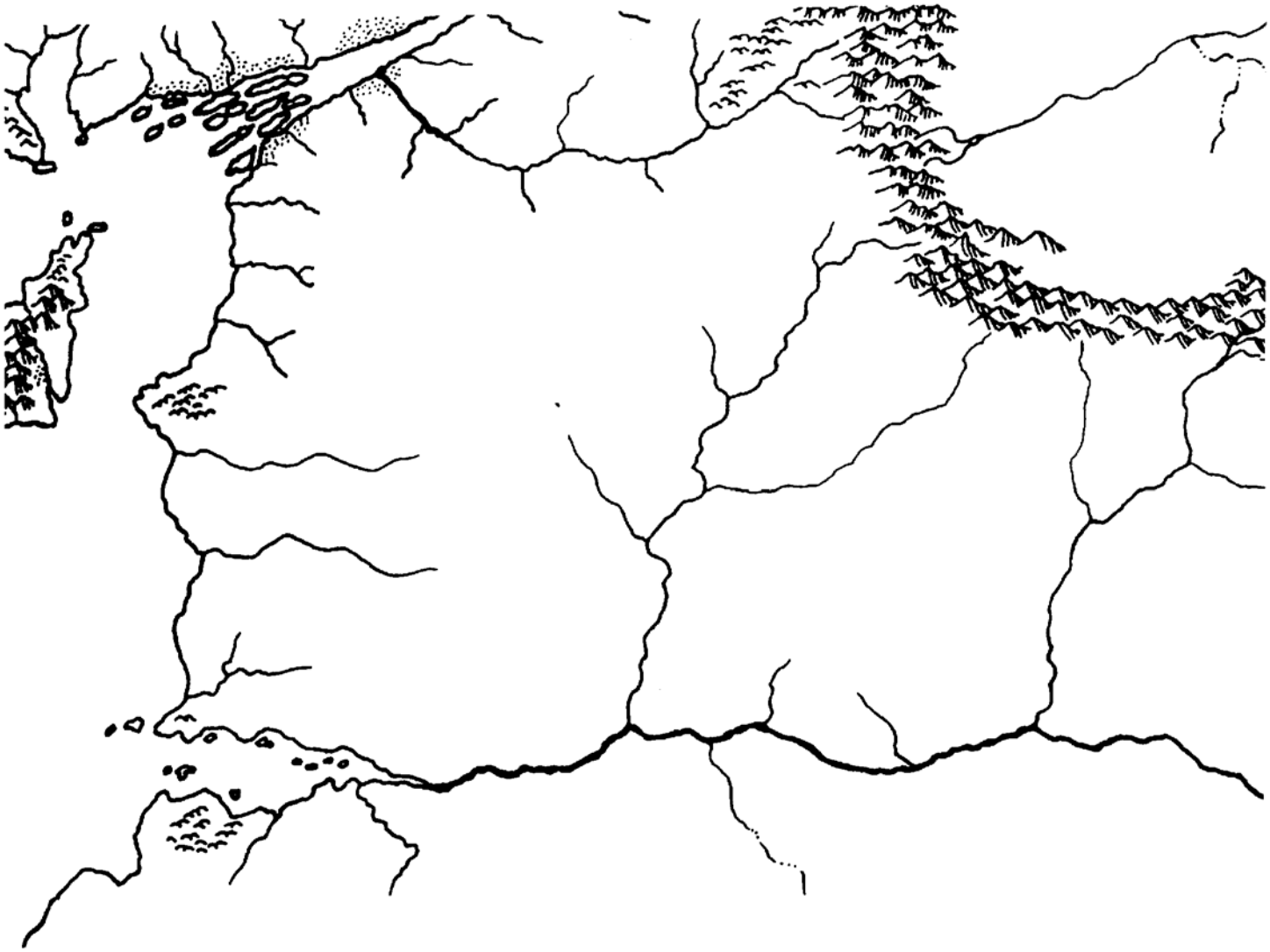
Narrow streams flow from the Ephel Dúath through the foothills, gradually merging into creeks which finally converge to form the mighty Harnen river. The Malduin (S. "Gold River") is one of these creeks, originating about a hundred miles west of the source of the Harnen. It and some of its tributaries contain auriferous sand, which can be washed from the water by the traditional manual process. The streams are rarely more than two feet deep and six feet wide, though the Malduin itself is up to twenty feet wide.

Prior to the discovery of the gold there, the Malduin had no name on Gondorian maps; but suddenly, the rumor was all over Gondor: gold had been found in the Ephel Dúath foothills, at the sources of the Malduin creek. Adventurous individuals began journeying to the area to make their fortunes; turning it into an ill-governed and turbulent place for about five years (after which the gold was depleted).

The Ephel Dúath foothills are low and undulating, and their soil is poor, discouraging farming. It rains occasionally during the winters, but the summers are hot and dry. The hills are covered by hardy grasses with occasional, thorny shrubbery and copses of olive trees and pines. The fauna is fairly varied. Deer, goats, and many other animals can be found, as well as their hunters: panthers, wolves, and lions.

The Common Goldwashers

Gold offers an irresistible lure for many, especially for the poor who see an opportunity to escape what they see as a dreary life. However, dreams of wealth usually turn out



to be just dreams. Very few goldwashers are lucky enough to become wealthy. Most just spend some tough years in the hills and then return home as poor as when they arrived—unless they join the really unlucky ones in shallow graves outside the hill encampments.

The average goldwasher is a sturdy farmer lad from Belfalas or the Vale of Anduin. He heard the tales of gold in Harondor, spent his savings equipping himself, and trekked the long way to the Malduin. He arrived a bit naive, but soon learned the basic skills of his new trade and the need to work long hours in the burning sun to avoid starvation. He also learned of the necessity of cooperation. A lone man has slim chances of survival in a place where there are no effective authorities.

The common goldwashers (who jokingly call themselves "Otters," since they work in the streams) band together for mutual benefit, building fortified encampments, and jointly maintaining some semblance of law and order. It is important for them to properly delineate land claims and to find methods of settling conflicts without resorting to violence. The Otters have for these purposes adapted the legal traditions of Gondor to a set of common law regulations suiting their needs.

There is a sprinkling of non-Dúnedain among the Otters: Donan from nearby north Harondor, Daen from Anfalas, Northmen from Rhovanion, Variags from Khand (unpopular among the Gondorians), and a closely-knit group of adventurous young Dwarves from Moria.

The goldwashers prefer to live in sturdy canvas tents, which are easy to transport from one location to another. An ordinary encampment has a population of twenty to a hundred. It is encircled by a log palisade to keep scavenging animals and unwanted visitors out. Inside, the encampment is divided into different sections for tents, for cooking, for latrines, and for keeping pack animals. Wagons must be left outside the palisade. Usually, the only joint facilities in the encampment are the latrines and the stable, both arranged to improve the general hygienic standard.

The Artisans and the Entrepreneurs

The people that really make money out of the gold-rush are those that provide the Otters with vital goods and services—like tools, beer, and women—at exorbitant rates, the pricing being by traditional principles of supply and demand.

In an encampment there is always a steady need for blacksmiths, wainwrights, tentmakers, and tailors to maintain and repair the goldwashers' possessions. Due to the generally inflated price levels, a skilled artisan is able to charge twice or three times as much as in the cities of the Vale of Anduin. However, his costs are equally inflated. Often, an artisan is a part-time goldwasher as well. Since he provides essential services while usually being a fully integrated member of the goldwasher community, the artisan is generally accepted by the Otters.

The Otters are able to provide much of their own food by hunting and cultivating small garden plots inside the encampments. However, the common man's skills are not enough to procure some items, such as good, beer, or spices. (Perhaps the services of women fall into this category as well.) The entrepreneurs supplying such merchandise earn well, and are often the subjects of the Otters' dislike and envy, forcing the former to employ bodyguards for protection. Many entrepreneurs are criminals from Pelargir or Minas Anor, sent here by their leaders to make a quick profit.

The Strongmen

Another group of winners are those individuals who, with the help of their henchmen, exclude others from rich areas, and let their underlings exploit their gold with the most sophisticated methods available. Since the only local Gondorian authority is led by a corrupt man (Tuor the warden), these strongmen are able to undertake most of their activities unhindered, as long as they grease Tuor's palm suitably. However, Tuor does not accept too blatant a criminal behavior, so even the strongmen have to clothe their activities with fig-leaves of legality.

Tuor the Warden

Harondor's governor has taken some measures to oversee the situation at the Malduin, and to try to curb the worst disregard for law and order. He has organized the Malduin area as a separate ward of the East March, appointing Tuor, an officer from among the Harondor Rangers, as its warden and judge. Tuor received a company of fifty soldiers to assist him in his less than envious task.

Tuor accepted his mission with dark pleasure in his heart, since he realized that this was good chance to make a small fortune through corruption. Being the only permanent representative of the King cast of the road, there is nobody to oversee him and discover that he accepts bribes. However, he is not stupid, so he is careful to maintain a surface of respectability and honesty. The best way of satisfying those that bribe him, while keeping an aura of credibility, is to be elsewhere when something critical happens, and to bias the judicial process by an excessive use of petty technicalities to achieve the desired results.

Already after one year as warden, Tuor is thoroughly disliked by the Otters, but they cannot accuse him of any substantial wrongdoings. Most of their complaints against entrepreneurs and strongmen founder on technicalities, while their opponents are far more successful when they bring their cases to the warden's judgment.

The Warden's Soldiers

The Harondor Rangers are a light infantry regiment recruited from the rural districts of western Harondor. It has been trained for independent, anti-bandit efforts in the territory's wilderness. Its soldiers are skilled frontiersmen, which is why they were chosen to accompany Tuor on his mission.

Fifty soldiers cannot keep complete control of several thousand goldwashers scattered in dozens of wilderness encampments, so their main task is to prevent outbreaks of anarchy and banditry, tasks that they so far have managed well. However, they have occasionally been ordered to enforce Tuor's unjust decisions against Otters. This has caused a lot of resentment among the common goldwashers, who no longer fraternize with the soldiers. The two groups become more and more estranged.

The soldiers really dislike going against their countrymen. They think that their main task is to fight raiders, bandits, and Orcs, not to evict ordinary goldwashers from disputed land. There is a growing disapproval with Tuor's policies, though none yet suspect him of taking bribes.

The Urdwan Natives

Many local Urdwan disapprove of the influx of greedy foreigners who (intentionally or otherwise) disrupt their traditional way of life. Some natives also want the gold for themselves, since they see themselves as the "property holders" of the area (even though it was the Gondorians who found the auriferous sand). For these reasons, there is much Urdwan banditry, and the goldwashers' encampments face intermittent raids. The newcomers have learned to always travel in well-armed groups.

On the other hand, a lot of Urdwan earn money by selling supplies to the goldwashers. There is a steady demand for wheat flour, spices, hides, and cloth (goods that the natives produce themselves and exchange for gold at a good rate). The precious metal is then used to buy tools and weapons from the Gondorian villages in western Harondor.

Hence, there is no united Urdwan front against the goldwashers. Instead, there has already been strife among the natives when antagonistic groups have tried to settle their conflicts by force. (This is fortunate for the Gondorians; should the natives unite, the

newcomers would not have a chance of surviving in the foothills.) So far, no Gondorian knows of these incidents, since there is so little communication between the two ethnic groups.

The Ephel Dúath Orcs

There are some Orc tribes stalking the Ephel Dúath. However, their number is small at this time, so raids on Mannish dwellings are very rare. The Orcs have a healthy respect tor the Urdwan, whose hunters have displayed an unusual skill in tracking and ambushing their raiding parties.

The Orcs have little information on the events in the foothills, and do not understand why there is such a sudden influx of Gondorians. Occasionally, a group attacks an Otter encampment to steal food and weaponry, but there is no organized warfare, due to the absence of a strong leader to take command over the squabbling tribes.

Player Characters

Various occupations and pursuits suitable for player characters exist in this environment, ranging from ordinary goldwashing to providing useful services to acting as mercenary guards. The two latter categories can more easily move around in the Malduin area in search of employment and may therefore be more preferable pursuits tor player characters.

Searching For Gold

A goldwasher is a stationary person, spending long and boring days sifting sand in the stream, where he has staked his claim. He searches for small nuggets that have been eroded out the Ephel Dúath rock and washed downstream by the water. The nuggets are small, weighing just a few grams, and pretty hard to spot unless one possesses the proper experience.

It is suggested that the Gamemaster use the following simple method to determine how much gold a goldwashing player character may discover during a day in the stream.

Since this is a fairly boring task, it should not be burdened by too much arithmetic:

1. Roll 1D10. Subtract 6 if the stream is of poor quality; 4 if the stream is a good one. Subtract another 2 if the character has worked less than a month as a goldwasher.
2. The result is the amount of gold, measured in grams (28 grams = 1 ounce), that the goldwasher has found. If the final result is zero or negative, too bad: he did not find any gold that day.
3. It the roll was a 10, roll again, and add the result; if another 10 is rolled, continue the process. (This is an open-ended series of rolls, making it possible, though extremely unlikely, to find quite big lumps of gold.)

Example: The experienced Boromir, who has staked a section of poor quality stream, works hard a sunny day; his player rolls 10, and hence rolls again, another 10, and again, 7, giving 27-6 (poor quality stream) = 21 grams. Boromir really struck it lucky when he found a gold lump weighing about 3/4 ounce. His buddy Dior in the adjacent stake is less lucky; his player rolling a 4, giving a zero result. No nuggets found today. However, he expects Boromir to make a small celebration with his buddies tonight.

Adventure One: The Seven Swordsmen

Arthad is a local strongman, originally a crimelord from Pelargir. He claims a large, rich stretch of the Malduin for his henchmen which, however, is already occupied by some Otter encampments, including one exclusively Dwarven, whose inhabitants show no inclination for moving out. The conflict between the Otters and Arthad's henchmen gradually escalates. Eventually, the strongman sends for seven notorious mercenaries from Pelargir, giving them the task of cleaning the area of its unwanted occupants.

The player characters, living or staying in one of the encampments, face the choice of fighting the injustice or leaving. Their fellow Otters are tough frontiersmen, but not warriors. The seven mercenaries are competent and merciless, and plan to kill or scare away the undesirable Otters with terror, leaving false clues, intended to implicate Urdwan as the perpetrators. The swordsmen's presence is initially unknown, but the player characters have the opportunity of uncovering the true story behind the fearsome events. However, putting them permanently out of action will be a major accomplishment.

If the player characters do not successfully deal with the mercenaries, the area after two weeks will be empty of goldwashers, apart from the stubborn Dwarves. Arthad's henchmen will gradually take over the abandoned encampments, while the mercenaries depart from the area. The crimelord has then achieved his plans. While all this goes on, the warden and his men will be on patrol in another part of his district. He has been bribed to stay away for at least three weeks.

Timeline

Day 1

The seven swordsmen arrive by foot in the area, and establish a small, hidden camp in a copse, some distance from the disputed area. After sunset, the mercenaries' spokesman Arn Walks to Arthad's camp to discuss the strongman's plans.

Day 2

From dawn till after sunset, the mercenaries scout the area to learn what it looks like and how their adversaries work and live.

Day 3-4 A few hours after sunset, the mercenaries capture two Otters, who are repairing their wagons, from the player characters' encampment and its surroundings, and then killed and buried in hidden graves. The prisoners are brought to a secluded spot by the mercenaries, interrogated brutally about the situation in the encampment and its surroundings, and then killed and buried in hidden graves. The kidnapping is executed with no obvious traces, so the victim's friends are unable to find out what has really happened. The culprits are skilled woodsmen and know how to hide their movements. This is a part of the mercenaries' plan to strike terror in the Otters' hearts, since an unknown foe is always more frightening than a known one. The disappearances are discovered after a few hours, but nobody is able to understand what exactly has happened.

Day 4

During Day 4, the mercenaries stalk some Otters who work alone, and kill and rob three, one of which is Qualin the Dwarf. (None of the victims belong to the player character's encampment.) The Northmen do not leave any genuine clues to who did it. Instead, at tone murcer site they drop a typical Urdwan dagger. However, currendy no Urdwan tribes are closer than thirty miles away, which makes the lead a bit mysterious. The rumor of the killings spreads like wildfire in the area. The stories become more and more distorted and frightening as they travel by word of mouth. Soon, a lot of Otters are convinced that they are stalked by Urdwan vampires and other terrible creatures.

Day 5 on

The mercenaries continue their campaign of terror, killing and robbing goldwashers. Since nobody dares working alone, the killers have to deal with groups of two or three adversaries, but that poses no major problems. Fear spreads among the Otters, and many prepare to depart for other areas. The Dwarves get angry, and decide to hole up in their encampement, while trying to tind out who killed their friend.

Arthad

A few years ago, Arthad was a minor crimelord in Pelargir, running smuggling operations. However, the law was eventually to catch up with him. He was tipped off by a contact in the city administration, terminated his operations, and departed with his henchmen from Pelargir before the city guard was able to strike. Arthad decided that a sojourn in the wilderness would be a good idea. He had heard of the Malduin gold-rush and of Tuor the warden, so he realized that this would be a good opportunity.

Arthad and his henchmen arrived to the Malduin about a year ago, claiming a potentially rewarding area and building an encampment there. He quickly discovered Tuor's corruption and started to bribe the warden to further his interest. The strongman covets the neighbors' claims and tries to find ways of expelling the local Otters. However, mainly due to the stubborn Dwarves, Arthad's plans have not progressed. To remedy that, he has sent for some assistance from Pelargir, thinking that what he cannot get by bribes and threats he can get by brute force.

The Seven Mercenaries

The notorious seven are Northmen — Hrafn, Arn, Leifr, Eirikr, Gunnar, Olafr, and Inge — originating from the upper Vale of Anduin judging from their native language. Today, no tribe would admit that they once belonged to it, so they must have been banished for some unusually heinous reason. The seven are skilled woodsmen and fighters, with lots of experience of killing Misty Mountain Orcs and Mirkwood beasts. They all look like the archetypal Northman: tall, muscular, blond and blue-eyed.

The seven have lived for some time in Pelargir, earning their living as swords for hire in the local underworld. The city authorities know that they are crooks, but have had a hard time pinning anything on them, since those that are about to witness against them in court usually disappear without a trace. The Northmen are a competent bunch of crooks, who rarely act rashly.

Now the mercenaries have come to Malduin on Arthad's invitation to terrorize certain settlements and scare off their inhabitants. The Northmen arrived in secrecy, establishing a small camouflaged camp in the wilderness. Their spokesman, Arn, visited Arthad's settlement during a night to get instructions and receive part of their wages. Then they initiated their terror campaign.

If the camp is discovered by outsiders, the Northmen will kill them if that seems to be a good option. Otherwise, they will pretend to be newly arrived goldwashers, who are looking for a good place to start working. They have been very careful not to leave any clues that point towards their camp.

The Fellow Otters

There are thirty-one NPCs sharing encampment with the players. It is not possible to provide information for all of them, but they all share some basic traits: stubbornness, professional competence, rugged physiques, honesty towards each other, and well-equipped. However, none of the NPCs are experienced warriors. Most come from the Anduin vale, but it is possible to introduce individuals from more distant countries.

The Dwarves

There are a group ot Naugrim goldwashers in the disputed area: twelve close friends and relatives from Moria — Bonn, Khorin, Thorin, Qualin, Noin, Doin, Gíli, Tíli, Zimli, Báin, Láin, and Rurin — who all belong to Durin's House and are very proud ot their ancestry. They are all young adults by Dwarven standards and of adventurous dispositions. When they heard of the gold deposits in the Malduin, they decided that a visit there would be an interesting and rewarding experience. Their elders were not too keen on the idea, but eventually let the youngsters go.

The Dwarves have built their own encampment, actually a stone house they built themselves, at a stream that they have staked out as their own. The neighboring Otters were originally a bit suspicious of the Naugrim, but quickly realized that the newcomers were honorable and hard-working individuals. The Dwarves used their skills to select a good area to exploit; their goldwashing operation has been unusually successful so far.

The Dwarves get along well with the neighbors, since they have been treated well by the Otters. On the other hand, they are very angry with Arthad, who offered them what they considered to be a trifling sum to move elsewhere in the region. Unknowingly, Arthad insulted the Dwarves and they have vowed not to give in to his demands, even though they may have to fight to defend their claim.

The Disputed Area

Arthad wishes to assume control over an area of approximately ten by five miles with two converging creeks: the Malduin and a tributary. His encampment is located at its northern edge. The area contains five other encampments, one of which belonging to the Dwarven goldwashers, located at or near a stream.

The Home Encampment

The characters live in a small encampment with thirty-one members. It consists of eight huts and hovels, four canvas tents, three storage shacks, and a palisade. Its goldwashers get along fairly well together (a troublemaker would soon discover that he had no buddies and quickly depart). Their claims are spread over a large area with the most distant about two miles away. Some of the Otters work in small teams, while others are loners that prefer the solitude ot the wilderness.

Arthad's Encampment

Arthad is a man who likes everything well organized, and his henchmen know it. They have built a small village, fortified by a well designed earthen wall and dry moat with an unusually military look. That is not so remarkable, since the designer and construction boss was Hador, a former officer of Gondor's army who was dishonorably discharged for misdemeanors and recruited by Arthad. He is now responsible for the encampment's security and defense.

The crimelord was smart enough to bring a lot ot cash and useful supplies with his expedition, so he has had no problems keeping his men in a good mood. The local prostitutes have agreed to visit the encampment regularly. Arthad also has an arrangement in which his underlings pay him a significant part of the gold they find in return for food, lodging, and protection. The henchmen are loyal, though a bit bored. Arthad's plans of gradually taking over all of the Malduin and strike it really rich fill them with anticipation. They believe that this is their greatest opportunity ever to make big money.

The henchmen are mostly rogues and robbers from Pelargir. Some have joined the gang after it came to the Malduin, hearing of the crimelord and believing that they would be better oft joining his rough but well-run operation. When the adventure starts, Arthad has forty-one henchmen plus the lieutenants Hador and Forweg, the latter serving as an unusually brutal chief enforcer.

Starting the Player Characters

The players enter the adventure when they learn of the disappearance of two men from their camp the night between Day 3 and 4. They should be encouraged to look into the matter. The players mostly have to rely on their wits. After the murder of Qualin, the Dwarves are prepared to offer whatever help they can to avenge their kinsman. Initially, the players' obstacle is the seven mercenaries. They arc formidable opponents and will kill without compunction. If they continue the dispute with Arthad, they will encounter other of his henchmen as well.

The players can keep what they can take from the mercenaries (such as armor and arms of reasonably good quality) and other foes. If the Dwarves are presented with clear evidence that the seven swordsmen are responsible for Qualin's death and that the Dwarf has been avenged, they reward the players with a heavy purse, containing gold.

Finding and Facing the Murderers

The players have to act on their own initiative to find out what is going on and to neutralize the perpetrators. The Gamemaster must let their actions influence the progress of the adventure and for that reason it is difficult to state exactly how events will develop. The players have some obvious strategies.

One is to closely investigate the murder sites to track the coming and going of the murderers. A very skilled tracker may be able to find some clue proving that the perpetrators were in fact not Urdwan. For instance, he may discover bootprints that definitely did not originate from the sandal-using Urdwan.

It is also possible to try to find the two Otters who disappeared during die evening of Day 3. It the players find their graves and exhume the corpses, they will see that the men were tortured before they died.

The most dangerous but also potentially most rewarding strategy is "counter-stalking," when the players monitor the Otters' goldwashing, perhaps using one of their number as a "bait," looking for suspect activities. The PC stalkers must be very good woodsmen to be able to surprise any of the Northmen, but if they succeed, they will have revealed the true culprits.

Even it the players succeed in identifying the murderers, they cannot immediately find out why they are here or who hired them. A captured mercenary will no break easily and talk. A prisoner may be recognized by someone who has lived in Pelargir, but to investigate that further, the characters need to travel thither. Arthad's lieutenant Forweg went to Pelargir two months ago to hire the mercenaries. In that city there are some witnesses at the Black Squid Inn who saw the notorious criminals meet for a discussion.

In the Malduin area, there is only one-event that connects the mercenaries to Arthad: Arn's visit to his encampment late Day 1. His arrival was witnessed by several of Arthad's henchmen. They do not know why he came or that he had his friends nearby.

However, they know who he is, since he is a well-known man in the Pelargir underworld. However, to find out about this, the players have to make one of Arthad's henchmen talk, which is not easy. Capture and interrogation is a crude method, and more subtle approaches could avoid attracting Arthad's ire.

If the Northmen realize that their cover has been blown, they will immediately abort their operation and depart from the area. Arthad has hired them to kill people, but they will not recklesslv risk their own lives for gold.

Talking to the Dwarves

The Dwarves are willing to discuss Qualin's death with the players, if convinced that this is a serious effort to solve the murder. They will speak openly of their general situation and, if asked, explain their bad relations to Arthad. However, they have very little information on the Qualin's death apart from the obvious: where he was found, how he had died (a deep gash in the neck), and what had been stolen from him (his gold purse). They have no knowledge of the Northmen.

The Dwarves have not been deterred from goldwashing by their kinsman's death. However, now they work in groups of four and are well-armed. This has made the Northmen reluctant to attack them, preferring instead the less formidable Mannish Otters.

If the players decide that they need some armed might as support in an expected confrontation, the Dwarves are willing, even insistent, to help. This could prove an essential reinforcement since the eleven Dwarves are competent and well-equipped fighters, though they are not particularly proficient in stealth skills.

Ending Arthad's Operation

If the players gather very good evidence of Arthad's conspiracy, they may try to take the matter to Tuor for a due legal procedure. The warden is reluctant to reveal his corruption by ignoring information obviously incriminating Arthad. However, before the matter has been dealt with legally, the players may encounter even more trouble with Arthad's other henchmen, since the crimelord does not back down easily.

The best method of defeating the strongman may perhaps be an attack on his camp by a united force of goldwashers; after all, Tuor and his men are elsewhere for three weeks. Arthad is not willing to risk his life to pursue his greedy plot.

Adventure Two: The Beauty and the Priest

The players are journeying along a wilderness path from one goldwasher encampment to another when they reach a copse of olive trees. In it they find a plundered camp-site, five overturned ox-carts and twelve Gondorian corpses and ten dead oxen. If they investigate the surroundings, they will discover Barahir, a young boy who is the sole survivor of the ox-cart caravan, whose task was to transport supplies to a remote encampment. The crew decided to spend the night here. just before dawn, they were at-tacked by a small band of mounted Urdwan, who killed the men, stole whatever they considered valuable and made off with the only woman of the caravan, the boy's teenage sister Rian. Barahir managed to sneak away and hide.

The night attack was executed by six hotspur braves from a nearby Urdwan nomad tribe, the Kashak. When they returned to the main camp with their booty and the woman, Klu, the tribe's chak (chieftain), was enraged. He had not ordered the attack so the deed was a flagrant disregard of his authority. Tor, the hotspurs' leader, aspires to the position of the chak and wants to stage a showdown with Klu; the raid was a way of hinting that he is a coward that fears fighting the Gondorians. Actually, despite disliking Gondor, Klu is worried that the deed will bring some kind of Gondorian revenge, but he is not a coward, being ready to face any adversary to prove it.

To complicate matters further, the tribe is currently visited by Shluk, a missionary of the Lugarlûr cult. He and his acolytes want Rían for a sacrifice, believing that a Gondorian virgin would be much appreciated by the Dark Lady. They stubbornly demand that Klu hand her over to them, hinting that a refusal would bring the goddess's retribution upon the Kashak. To the Urdwan, being a superstitious people, these veiled threats carry quite a weight.

Klu has ordered Rían to be held a prisoner in a tent for the time being, guarded by some elderly women, while the disputing men try to decide on a course of action. The tribal customs demand that the adult men should debate a controversial matter until almost all of them agree on what to do. It can take hours of discussions to reach such a consensus, but the Kashak warriors are patient. Also, since they do not know that there was a survivor in the caravan, they see no need to hurry.

Meanwhile, the players have an opportunity to find a way of liberating Rían. They have several options, such as negotiating a release, demanding a trial by combat, or staging a raid. There is no set way of ending the adventure, since the initiative rests with the players. (If they tarry too long, the Gamemaster may decide that they discover that Shluk has departed with Rían. Then they will have to continue the pursuit to that Evil temple, facing further dangerous adventures in Harondor. But such events must be designed by the Gamemaster; they are not dealt with here.)

Barahir

Barahir's father Gildor was a teamster who earned his living by transporting supplies to distant encampments. Since he was a widower, he always brought his two children Barahir and Rían along when working. When he and his colleagues were killed by raiding Urdwan, the children survived due to fortunate circumstances.

Barahir is a lanky twelve years old boy with brown hair and eves. He has traveled with his father for several years and is used to living in the wilderness. Gildor has taught him to tend draught animals, and he has acquired a good skill in it.

When the players find Barahir in the copse, he is very frightened and sorrowful. He has witnessed the death of his father and the kidnapping ot his sister. When the Urdwan left, the boy was alone far away from any help. He desperately wants the players to help, but he tries to hide his emotions behind a tough surface. This act is not very successful and he is prone to break down and cry in stressful situations and to suffer from violent nightmares.

Barahir persistently tries to persuade the players to rescue his sister. If they refuse, he will sneak away to make an attempt on his own, something diat would .surely fail. However, the boy is so contused by the recent events diat he is unable to behave sensibly.

Rían

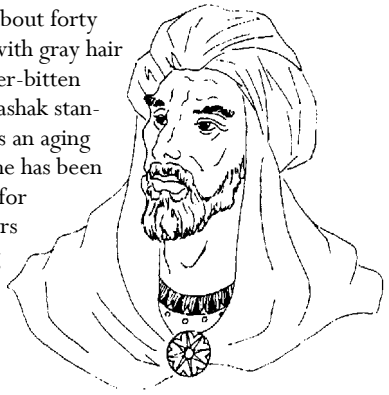
Rían is fifteen years old and has the same looks as Barahir; one immediately realizes that they are siblings. She has cut her hair short in a boyish way for hygienic reasons and is dressed in pants and shirt, since it is more comfortable when traveling than a woman's skirts.

Rían has had the same kind of upbringing as Barahir and her father trained her to be caravan cook. Gildor has also taught the girl to defend herself; teamsters are a rowdy lot and occasionally a woman must use force to safeguard her privacy.

However, not even melee proficiency are enough when grappled by two strong foes. Tor was fascinated by her display of sword skill and determination. He wants this "cat girl" in his small harem, regardless of her views on the matter.

In captivity, Rían has done her best to appear defiant while hiding her tears behind that pose. She does not know the Urdwan tongue, so she has no idea what the nomads plan to do with her. However, she is determined to escape whenever a suitable opportunity presents itself.

Klu



Klu is about forty years old with gray hair and weather-bitten skin. By Kashak standards, he is an aging man. But he has been their chak for twelve years and during this time, he has earned the respect of most. However, his stamina and strength have begun to decrease, and young and ambitious men have started to plan for the day when he must retire and a new leader will be elected by the warriors. But Klu is not ready to step down yet, and he does not want Tor to be his successor since he distrusts the rash and belligerent youngster.

Klu has decided that the Kashak should refrain from fighting the local Gondorians, since he has heard that Tuor's soldiers are dangerous foes and that Gondor's army would mobilize whatever force it desires to crush the Malduin tribes if considered necessary. Since the goldwashers intrude on the tribe's traditional lands, disrupting herding and hunting, this decision is unpopular with many warriors and braves who instead want to force the Gondorians away by war.

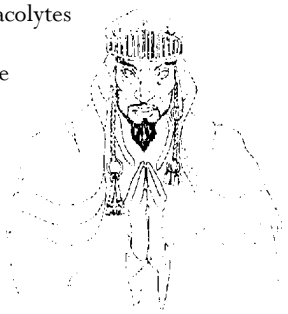
Tor

Tor is a daring and charismatic warrior in his early twenties. He has a loyal following of braves somewhat younger than himself. However, Tor is prone to rash decisions and has too high an opinion of himself. Most experienced warriors agree that he would not

be a good chak. Tor is convinced that if he just proves his martial prowess, the older warriors will rally around him when he challenges Klu for the position of chak.

The raid on the Gondorian oxcart caravan seemed to be a good example of improving his reputation. It was an easy victory, since the Gondorian teamsters were outnumbered by the warriors. Tor was fascinated by the fighting spirit displayed by Rían, a behavior quite unlike that ot the coy Kashak women. He was filled by desire for the "cat girl," whose heart and body he soon intends to conquer. She was summarily dragged off to the camp, much to Klu's ire who considered the raid to be quite useless and an invitation to Gondorian retribution.

Shluk



Shluk and his s acolytes come from a tribe closely relate to the Kashak. They are on a missionary tour among the Urdwan tribes of the Ephel Dúath foothills, trying to spread the worship of the Dark Lady and to gather contributions to the temple.

They got a lukewarm reception at the Kashak, since Klu is not particularly religious. He really thinks that the Lugarlûr priests live off the work of ordinary people without doing anything useful in return. However, he knows it would impolite to be outspoken and disguises his reluctance to support the cult in more diplomatic phrases.

Shluk is a cult fanatic who believes that the end justifies the means when spreading the cult of the Dark Lady, often referred to as the Giver of Gifts, the Naked Steel, and the Soul Hardener, but whose judgment often is clouded by his rigid faith. He is in his thirties and has extensive experience in manipulating people for the good of the cult. He has no scruples and lacks conventional Urdwan morals.

The cultists are dressed in ordinary Urdwan style, but their clothes are completely black to show whom they serve. The acolytes, boys in their late teens, are fanatically loyal to their priest and will execute all his orders regardless of the consequences.

The Kashak Camp

The Kashak tribe has about 500 members (83 families) and its herds consists of about 2000 sheep and goats and 100 horses. The main camp, located at a stream where the dwellers practice agriculture and fishing, has a population of about 130 adult males (of which perhaps 100 are able to fight), 200 adult women, and 120 children. During the day, the camp is bustling with life. During the night, there are always 25 men on guard duty. Should there be any night-time commotion, it will likely awaken the sleeping warriors.

Each Kashak family lives in a big goat-hide tent, which they share with dogs and chicken coops. The chak's tent is the biggest and it is always guarded by two warriors. Guests are accommodated in special tents, which also may be provided with guards if the chak considers it warranted. Shluk, suspicious by habit, prefers to have his tent watched by his acolytes.

Twenty almost adult boys together with ten dogs are responsible for watching the herds and spend most of the time away from the main camp. About 30 mounted braves patrol the surroundings night and day in small groups, searching for predators and strangers.

Starting the Player Characters

The players face a tribe of Urdwan and an evil priest and his acolytes. Fighting is hardly the best way of succeeding, since the players are badly outnumbered. Such obstacles are best defeated through cunning and negotiations.

If the players liberate Rían from the Kashak, she and Barahir will offer them the remaining family savings, forty silver coins, in return. However, considering the kids' difficult future, it should perhaps be more polite by the players to refuse the money.

If the rumor of their deed reaches Tuor die warden, he sees an opportunity- to improve his tarnished reputation among the locals. In a public ceremony at his residence, he rewards the player group with two good pack horses from his stable and the two kids with a purse laden with silver, while making a speech in which he tries to incite anger against the Urdwan. (All this is, of course, an attempt to draw attention away from his own wrong-doings, and it is doubtful whether Tuor's reputation will improve. It is more likely that the cynical goldwashers will disregard his words, while appreciating the players' deed. The player characters will get a lot of free beer whenever they visit an Otter encampment during the following weeks.)

The Dispute Concerning Rían

When seeing Rían in die Kashak camp, Shluk immediately decides that die Gondorian girl would be an excellent sacrifice to the Dark Lady. He argues energetically for this, which upsets Tor a lot. The brave does not care much for the cult and would really hate to be deprived of his newly won prize by what he considers to be a lusty priest. Tor believes that Shluk is lying and would rather keep Rían as his slave than sacrificing her. In fact, if the priest gets the girl, Tor is ready to re-take her by force when the cultists have left the safety of the Kashak camp.

Klu is mostly worried about the local Gondorians' reactions on Tor's raid. The Kashak have a reputation of being fairly restrained since they have not harassed the goldwashers. In return, they have been left alone by the Gondorians, who are more concerned with the more militant Urdwan tribes. Klu does not know whether there were any surviving Gondorian witnesses of the raid. Tor says that there was no one left alive when the fighting ceased, but Klu does not really trust that. He knows by long experience how easy it is for someone to sneak away unseen in the confusion of a nightly skirmish. If there would be a Gondorian request of Rían's release, the chak would prefer to do so even though he would not go as far as complying with demands for handing over Tor for a trial.

When it comes to Shluk's demands, Klu would prefer not to yield. As he sees it, the Lugarlûr priests have a craving for power over matters that are none of their concern. The chak would be happier it they could stick to their temple and be satisfied with token shows of obeisance to the Dark Lady from the nomads. However, if he is able to placate the priest by handing over the Gondorian girl while simultaneously proving to his tribe that the cult will not be given an increased influence, he is ready to do so. Also, if Rían is brought away from the tribe, he can easily stonewall all Gondorian inquiries.

During the discussions, Tor gradually realizes that his raid was a mistake. It has not strengthened his position and many senior warriors consider it to have been foolish. However, he cannot back down too much since it would make him look submissive. Also, his emotions partially rule his mind, so he wants to keep Rían as his prize, believing that he could sire a strong and brave son with the "cat girl." The Kashak males' attitude towards women being what it is, her views on the matter are unimportant to him.

The debate concerning Rían's fate will last for as long as the Gamemaster thinks useful for the adventure. The Kashak prefer to achieve some kind ot consensus among

themselves, especially when it comes to such important matters as the relations to the Lugarlûr priests so they may well argue for hours. The Gamemaster also decides what course of action is chosen by the Kashak warriors, depending on the players' strategy and the needs of the campaign. For instance, if the Gamemaster wants the players to travel to Lugarlûr for future adventures, giving Rían to Shluk and letting the players know of it would be a bait for getting them there. On the other hand, if the Gamemaster would like the players to befriend Klu, they should be given the opportunity of negotiating with him in search of a solution good for the tribe and for Rían; however, such a settlement should turn Tor into an implacable foe who may cause them trouble as long as they stay in the Malduin region.

Negotiations

The players may approach the Kashak under a sign of peace to negotiate. They will be discovered some distance from the camp and get an escort. Klu will receive them with due Urdwan courtesies and discuss their matter. Language will not pose a difficulty. Several tribesmen speak broken Westron and one will interpret; Klu knows only a few phrases of that language.

The results of the negotiations depend entirely on how the players deal with the Kashak. The nomads are proud and easily insulted. (However, they are honorable enough to respect the hospitality traditions that make a guest inviolate. The characters are safe in the camp as long as they do not do something really stupid.) If the players present Klu with a way of releasing Rían in return for a promise of no further Gondorian investigations of the matter and simultaneously saving his face in front of the tribe he may well accept it. He does not care very much what the Dark Lady cultists think of his actions, but when it comes to Tor he has some concerns. The chak does not want to insult the brave, but he is also very keen on making a point that Tor has acted rashly and hence should not complain when loosing his booty.

It is not easy to find a formula to satisfy the chak, but if the players are successful they will leave the camp together with the girl, safe from Tor's and Shluk's revenge. The brave knows that an attempt to re-capture the girl would shame the tribe's honor and that the Kashak warriors would punish him severely for such a deed. The priest has no such compunctions, but he does not have enough resources to act on his own.

On the other hand, if the negotiations fail, the characters will be escorted away from the camp. The chak will order increased security measures since he fears a Gondorian attack. Then the discussions within the tribe on Rían's fate will resume. The players will have to consider other courses of action, while the Gamemaster decides on what Klu will do with the captive girl.

Interrogating a Prisoner

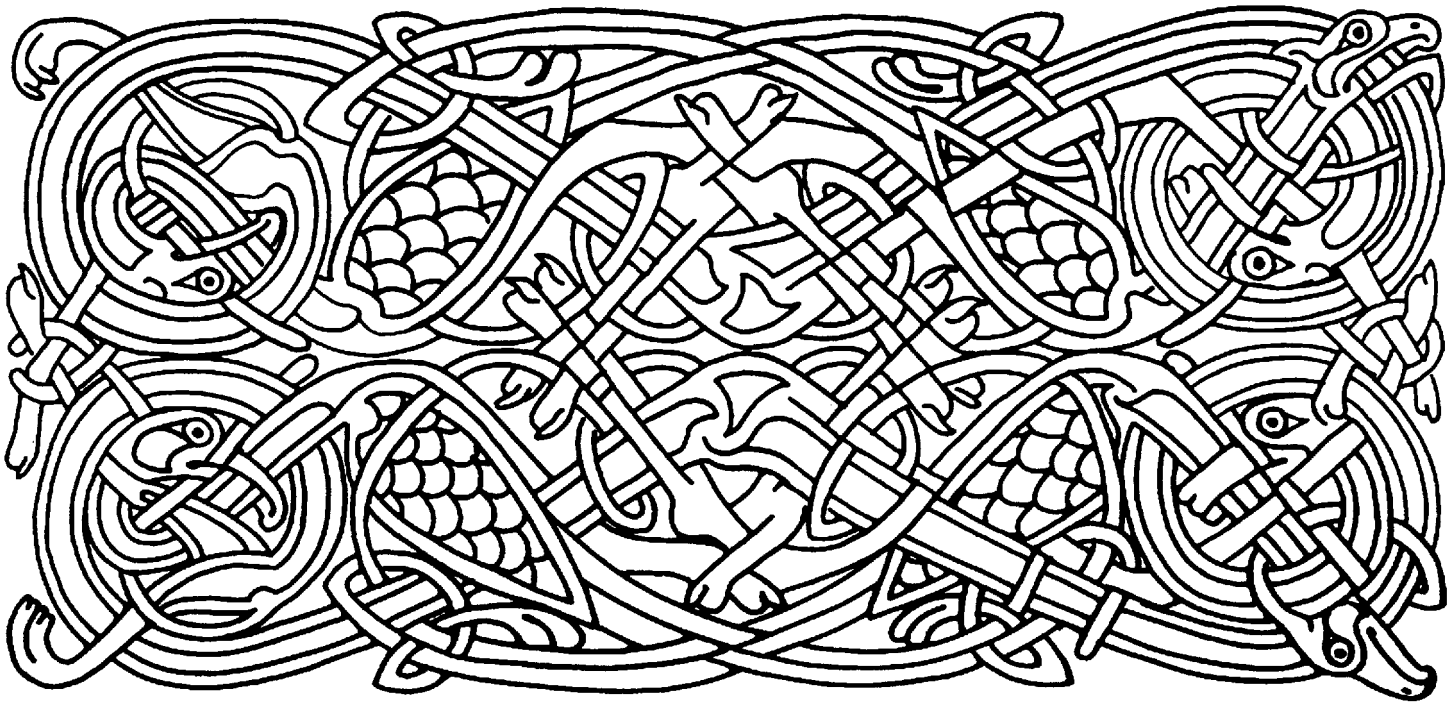
If the players decide to capture a member of the Kashak to find out more of the tribe and its camp, they will discover that it is very hard to make him talk. Only very harsh torture will break his silence. Furthermore, such an act, if discovered, will bring the perpetual wrath of the tribe upon the players. The Kashak warriors will spend a lot of energy on finding the culprits and torture them to death.

Staging a Raid

If the player characters manage to identify which tent is Rían's prison, they may try to liberate her by force. A day-time attempt is almost doomed to fail, since the camp is bustling with life. A nightly raid is far less risky; since most of the tribe is soundly asleep and the camp is only illuminated by the stars and the moon. However, the warriors on guard are experienced and alert men. The players must plan carefully if they are to succeed. Probably, some kind of diversion should be executed to improve the odds.

If the raid is successful, Tor will attempt to pursue the characters to avenge what he considers a grave insult. He and his buddies are good hunters and may be able to track the characters for long distances, unless precautions are taken. The players may encounter them anywhere in the general Malduin area and this time they are out for blood (and for Rían, of course).

Klu is secretly relieved that Rían has disappeared, since he now is rid of a nuisance. Shluk cannot make more undue demands and Gondorians asking questions about a kidnapped girl can be safely ignored. If Tor and his friends want to pursue the matter on their own, he will allow it without voicing any opinion. After all, the brave has been insulted by the raid and if he should perish in his quest for vengeance, Klu would be rid of another nuisance. Shluk is of course quite angry, but cannot do very much about it. He and his acolytes will soon depart from the Kashak to continue his missionary work in neighboring tribes.



An Interview with Laurie Battle

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How did Middle-earth Role Playing *come to be? This is a question we shall be exploring in the next few issues of* Other Hands *through a series of interviews with some of the people who helped make it possible. I thought it valuable to begin, then, with Laurie Battle, Licensing Director of Tolkien Enterprises. In the following discussion (the transcript of an online interview), I've asked Laurie to tell us something about the big picture: how did it all begin on the legal end of things?*

Chris: Just so our readers will know who is talking here, could you let us know a little about yourself? What role do you play as Licensing Director at Tolkien Enterprises? How (or when) did you first get involved in the Middle-earth roleplaying license?

Laurie: I'm pretty much a conduit through which matters pertaining to Tolkien flow in our company. I work fairly independently, from a home office, and balance my Tolkien work with a variety of other activities. I read and enjoyed Tolkien as a junior high school student in the '60s and again in college, but wouldn't classify myself as a hardcore fan. My personal interests are eclectic and range from politics to women's spirituality to popular culture to chaos theory to alternative education. I think Tolkien was a brilliant scholar and writer. My personal interests in his work focus more on the cultural significance of what he accomplished, how his writing created and continues to create a very real sense of magic for so many people; and on some of his lesser-known writings such as the essay "On Fairy Stories." I've been doing the Tolkien licensing for about ten years.

Chris: Since the roleplaying license is presumably only one facet of its larger work, could you say something about Tolkien Enterprises itself? How is it related to the Tolkien Estate?

Laurie: Tolkien Enterprises is a division of the Saul Zaentz Company, an independent film company best known for its films "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" and "Amadeus." George Allen & Unwin sold film, merchandising and assorted other rights to United Artists while Tolkien was still alive, and I believe they sat on a shelf there until the mid-70's when SZCo bought them and subsequently produced the Ralph Bakshi film of "The Lord of the Rings." Tolkien Enterprises is not related to the Tolkien Estate.

Chris: When and where did the initial impetus to license roleplaying games based in Tolkien's world come from? Was it Tolkien Enterprises that pushed for the idea, or was it ICE that took the initiative?

Laurie: ICE initiated the roleplaying games license.

Chris: Was ICE the only gaming company that applied for the license, or were their other candidates?

Laurie: Prior to ICE's request to be licensed, no one else had expressed interest in a roleplaying games license.

Chris: What factors prompted the decision to issue a world-wide exclusive license for Tolkien-based roleplaying games (rather than to make such a license available to more than one company)? Is this standard practice with other (i.e., non-roleplaying game) licenses, or were special considerations involved?

Laurie: Each situation is different. Business deals always boil down to what scenario is likely to make the most money. In some cases having two or more non-exclusive licensees makes sense, and in others it doesn't.

Chris: What is the origin of the stricture that ICE only set its products in the Third Age of Middle-earth, and that it therefore officially be based only on *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit,* but not *The Silmarillion?*

Laurie: We only own the rights to *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings;* therefore our licensees are restricted to material contained within these books.

Chris: I understand that ICE is able to "contract out" to other gaming companies. For example, their *Wizards* card game was originally envisioned as a project to be executed by Wizards of the Coast. How does this power relate to the exclusive nature of their license? Does Tolkien Enterprises ever take a hand in "approving" ICE's relations with other game companies, or is that their own affair?

Laurie: We have product approval rights and some oversight capability. However, we generally give licensees wide latitude to handle their own affairs. Other than that, for this I would defer to Pete Fenlon's judgment of how much of the contractual terms he wants to make public.

Chris: In ICE's official announcement of its "Perestroika" reform of its Middle-earth series (published in the very first issue of *Other Hands),* I detected a certain apologetic undertone to Pete Fenlon's bold pronouncements about the projected revision and improvement of the *MERP* line (and I strongly sense that this was directed as much to Tolkien Enterprises as it was to the general reader). How have the second edition *MERP* releases been received by Tolkien Enterprises? Is the general feeling that improvement or progress has been made towards a better quality product?

Laurie: To be honest, our eye is focused on royalty income rather than on the finer details of the games themselves. None of the people on our business end is personally involved in playing these kinds of games. I look through the Iron Crown releases to keep a sense of the general overview of what they're doing, and I pay attention to feedback from various sources including people such as yourself, but I don't engage at a deeper level than that.

Chris: Thank you very much for your time.

Map of Forochel

Wesley Frank
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The youngest and rawest of the lands of Middle-earth, Forochel began its existence as the rubble-strewn remains of the Iron Mountains and the rest ofMorgoth's domains in the frozen north. Arda has, in its own way, healed the scars of that ancient catastrophe, but in the Northern Waste has not done so in a way that favors the needs of mortals. Plants and animals that could survive in a land of nearly year-round winter came to Forochel early in the Second Age, followed by the Lossoth and the Umli, peoples of north central Middle-earth, both races fleeing westward from ancient wars. Few among the free peoples troubled them, and they were content to be forgotten by the powers of the world.

In the Third Age, knowledge of this frozen northland is rare in the civilized lands to the south, kept mainly in Elvish memories and a few Arthadan records. Few people of note in Eriador ever traveled in Forochel, save during the reign of Amlaith, first and greatest of the Kings of Anhedain. After T.A. 861, with the new kingdom of Cardolan cutting off his southern trade, Amlaith sent explorers into the north country seeking new means of contacting the outside world. His policies accomplished little, but all scholars and explorers of later times seeking knowledge of Forochel must begin by checking the records kept by his scribes.

The following notes describe the key regions and locations of interest in Forochel as understood by folk in T.A. 1640, along with items of lore of general interest to adventurers.

ANGSÎR (*S. "Iron River"*)

A cold, winding river that leaves the Nan Angmar and wanders north across the Talath Oiohelka to the Hûb Helcharaes, with side portages leading to the Lókosir. Until the 13th century of the Third Age it was a primary trading route into the north country. Now die Angmarcan keep at Mindil Kepich (Log. "Tower Forlorn") guards this water road. Raiders from Angmar use the Angsir to penetrate quickly into Forochel during the short summer mondis.

EMYN NIMBRITH

(S. "White-rubble Hills")

This dismal range of hills is essentially the broken wreckage of the ancient Iron Mountains. Bushes grow out of sheltered crevasses in the in summer, but never enough to change the hills' bleak, washed out, grey-white color. Broken pieces of a gigantic dragon are said to be buried in these hills, but they may just be stone carvings. The purpose of the carvings remains a mystery.

ERED MUIL (S. *"Bleak Mountains"***)**

Utterly lifeless and said to be haunted by spirits of cold. At the top of one of its peaks stands the frozen corpse of a Second Age Noldo lord. The face of another mountain at the north end of the range is said to be carved with runes revealing every spell of magic known in the world.

ERED RHIVAMAR

(S. *"Mountains of the Edge of the World"***)** These are not high peaks, but snow-capped all year round. Only musk ox and downy-hair caru find food here, along with creatures able to hunt them. This mountain range is also the home of unnatural things, some left over from the Elder Days and the dark enchantments of Morgoth. One or more Arthadan expeditions crossed it several centuries back, but records are sketchy. Carved on a rock slab overlooking the Hub-in-Uinin is a message: *I, Malgolodh, son of the son of King Amlaith, forbid any to pursue further my quest. I will entomb myself in the hills to protect happier lands from the evil which has devoured my companions.* Searches ordered by the King produced no recorded results; Prince Malgolodh and the evil he feared remain buried at the edge of the world.

GONDLADWEN (*S. "Stone Tundra"***)**

This was once a granite plateau, scoured by glaciers in the Elder days, but brought down near to sea level during the War of Wrath. There is still little soil or life here. The Lossoth who wander this crevassed plain hunt and dwell mainly along the watercourse.

HUB HELCHARAES

(*S. "Bay of Cracking Ice"*)

The Lossoth dwell on both shores of this bay, taking whales, seal, and fish from it when they can. Umli (Half-dwarves) dwell on the eastern shore, around the estuary of the Lókosir. Cardolani and Riverman whalers came here in the summer months before the Witch-king brought down cold from the north and made the voyages too dangerous. It is said that it was also the Witch-king who summoned the Uidhrog (S. "Demon-whale") to plague mortals, but the Lossoth say that the Uidhrog is older than any mortal magic.

The Lossoth of the northern shore of this gulf make their sod and snow huts close to its shores. A village of this people is immortalized by a parchment kept in the collection of the Kings of Arthedain: *Late and sad it was that I learned this caution of the Hemoel Lossoth: no man is let out unguarded in snow weather in this season. All of our company are now lost to the ice woman save my husband. I have seen them standing uncloaked in the snow; pale, tormented, guarding their new mistress with her lace gowns and her fine white teeth. By the grace and guile of my ancestors, she will not have Thorluin while I breath.* Ammerethiel Foros, the inscribcr of the parchment, seems to have brought it back to Arthedain in the 12th century, but no further details are recorded.

HÛB-IN-UININ (S. *"Bay of Whales"*)

There is a wealth of sea life in this gulf, brought up from Belegaer by a warming current. Whales follow the smaller life forms to the edge of the ice, and are hunted in their turn by Lossoth and Cardolani whalers in warmer years. The Lossoth dwell mainly along the Rast Naethlos on the eastern shores of the Hûb-in-Uinin, for fear of the Helneryth (S. "Ice Giants") and worse things that take fish from the western shore. The Cardolani once kept summer huts and stations along the Bay. The assumed reason for the abandonment of this practice was the increasing cold of the last few centuries; others know that the decision was made after a season marred by repeated incidents in which sailors drowned in the bay walked ashore and tried to break into the huts.

LINLADWEN (*S.* "*Wash Tundra*")

This is formally part of the Talath Oiohelka, particularly that part lying north of Arthedain. The Linladwen has been smoothed by rivers and soil eroded from the Rammas Formen. It is better watered then most of Forochel and able to sustain scattered trees and shrubs in its stream-beds and bogs.

LÓKOSIR (Q. *"Dragon River"*)

The greatest river of Forochel, passing through a thousand miles of die Talath Oiohelka and the Gondladwen to reach the Hûb Helcharaes. It serves as the main east-west route for the few Lossoth and Umli who cross Forochel each summer, as well as an invasion route for Orcs of Gundabad seeking victims in the northlands. Great herds of Caru migrate yearly along this river, preyed upon by all other inhabitants of Forochel. Strangely, the two hundred mile-long estuary of the Lókosir is deeper water than die Hûb Helcharaes it flows into. It is said diat this great fissure in the Gondladwen has no bottom, and that a man who cast a line far enough into its depths might catch a monster or hook a demon from beyond the bounds of the world.

LÓLADWEN (*S. "Fen Tundra"*)

This region is treacherously boggy all year round thanks to scattered hot springs. Monsters dwelling in the mud are an even greater danger. Water draining off the surrounding hard tundra drains slowly eastward into the Nen Rhívamar. This barrier keeps Ice Orcs and worse creatures of the farthest north from troubling the Lossoth.

NARLADWEN (*S. "Fire Tundra"*)

This is a volcanic basin set in the midst of icy-hills, alleged to harbor demons and fire spirits. Some Arthadan explorers returned from here bearing precious gems and green leaves. No one who has gone in search of the gems ever returned.

NEN RHÍVAMAR

(*S. "Sea on the Edge of the World"*)

An arm ot the great northern ocean, this gulf is closed off by ice virtually year round and open to Umli fishermen only for a month or so of summer.

NUMERIADOR

(Q./S. "West Empty Land")

A wild, broken country. Canoe travel and portage routes lead Northman trappers from Numeriador to the shores of the Hûb Helcharaes. This is the primary fur trading route into western Forochel. In warmer years ships from Cardolan compete with the Northmen, but warmer years have been rare since the rise of Angmar.

RAMMAS FORMEN

(S./Q. "Great Wall of the North")

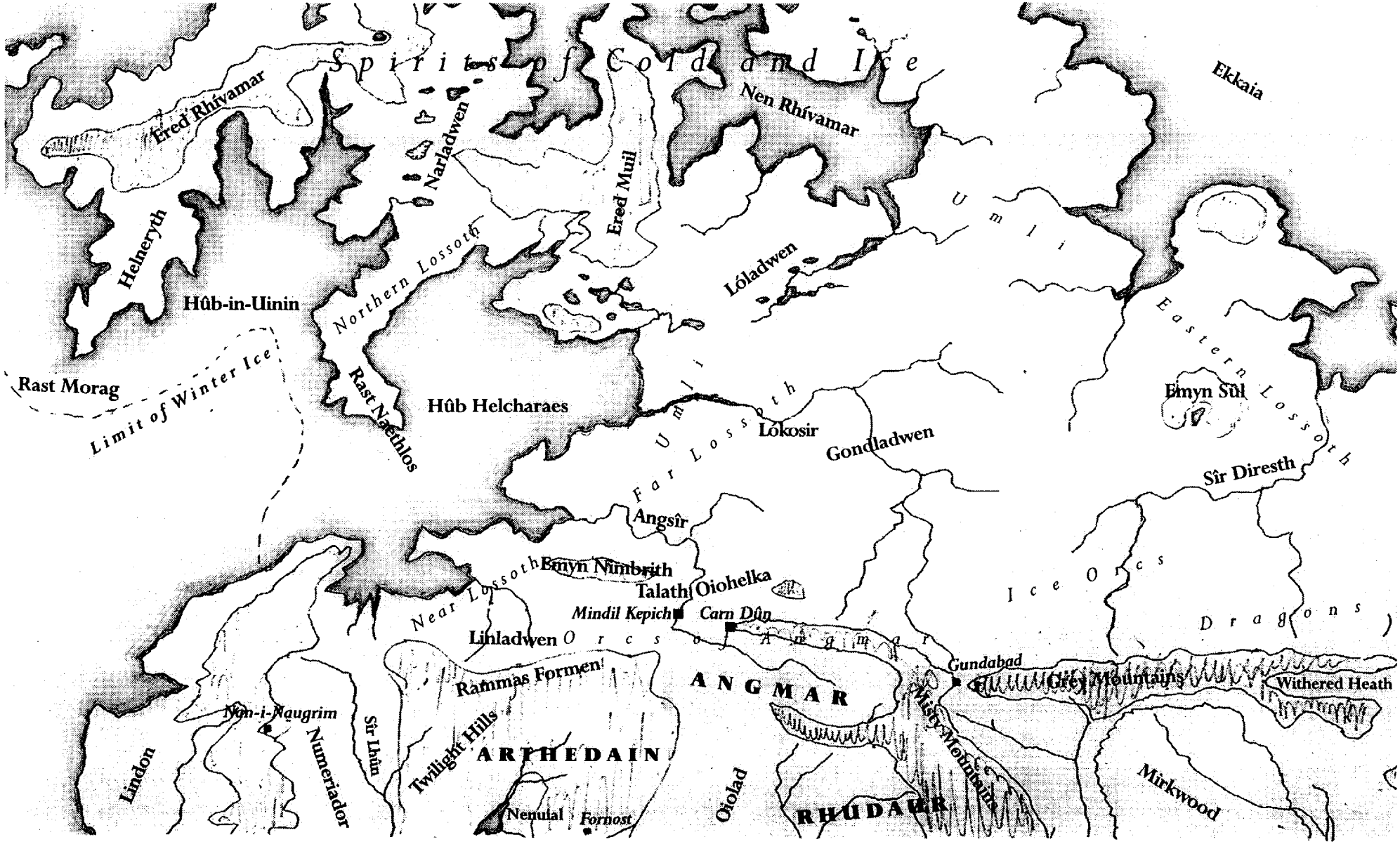
A long, rock-strewn ramp separating die Arthadan highlands and the Talath Oiohelka. The practiced eye can still pick out the traces ot the collapse of the Iron Mountains at the end of the First Age. Where the mountains went none can say for sure, but Elvish songs tell of fissures opening into the fiery Heart of the World and the Edge of the Void.

TALATH OIOHELKA

(*S./Q "Plain of Eternal Cold"*)

This rubble-strewn tundra lies north of the Rammas Formen of Arthedain and the Grey and Misty Mountains. It gets drier as one travels east from Forochel, and shows less greenery in summer. During the five months the Talath Oiohelka is without snow, the traveler here is seldom out of sight of bogs, caru, and mosquitoes the size of a Dúnadan's diumb.

Map of Forochel



PRODUCT PREVIEW

Middle-earth: The Wizards

Chris Seeman
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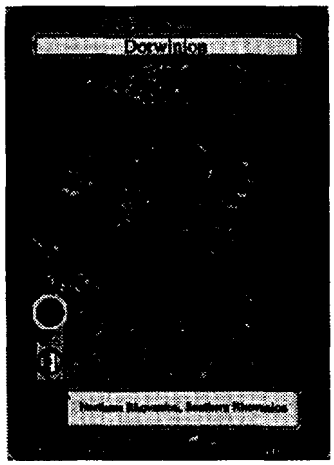
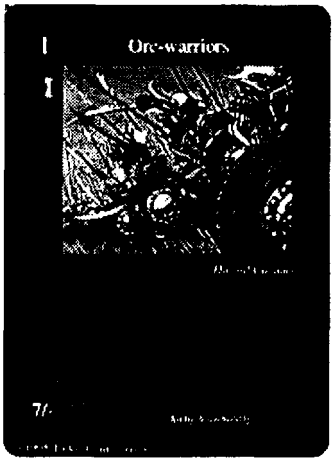
Middle-earth: The Wizards is a collectible card game that ICE will be releasing in the stores this coming December. If successful, *The Wizards* will become the "core" of a series of similar decks, each of which will expand upon a certain facet of Tolkien's world as applied to a particular style of play. For example, *The Wizards* focuses on the five Istari, whose roles the players assume in their struggle to coordinate the resources of the Free Peoples against the threat of Sauron. One future projected deck, to be entitled *Dark Minions,* will allow the players to take on the cause of the Dark Lord and his servants, while other decks will concentrate of magical items or upon large-scale warfare. The foregoing preview, based on information provided by chief designer Coleman Charlton, will hopefully give you a taste of things to come.

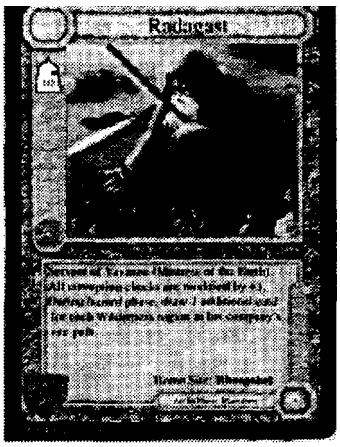
First, some history. Two or three years back, ICE offered to license Wizards of the Coast (the west-coast gaming company responsible for *Magic: The Gathering*, and other highly successful card games) to do a Middle-earth-based game. As it turned out, however, Wizards of the Coast were too busy with their own products that ICE decided to undertake the task themselves. Jessica Ney-Grimm and others associated with *Middle-earth Role Playing* were involved in order to contextualize such a game within the milieu of Tolkien's world.

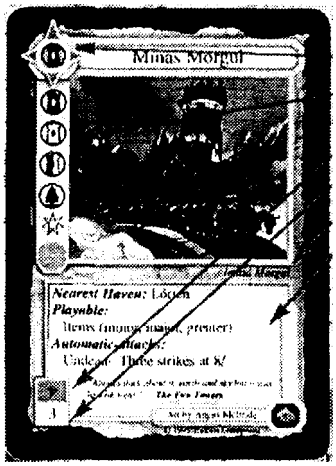


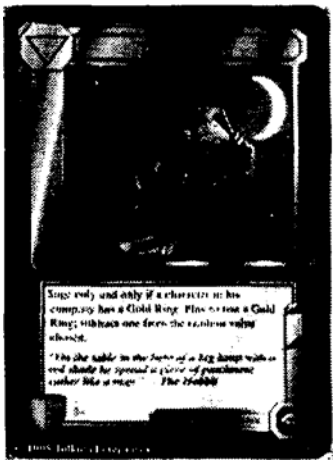
It was soon decided that the five wizards—Saruman, Gandalf, Radagast, Alatar, and Pallando—would be an ideal focus, because the Istari as Tolkien had conceived them were both united in a common cause or mission, and at the same time offered a context for competition among each other for the rousing of the peoples of Middle-earth to awareness of their peril. This setting invited multiple players, whereas a game premised upon a two-player conflict (one playing the Dark Lord and the other representing the forces of Good) seemed too limiting, at least for a core product.

One of the benefits of a Middle-earth card game as over against other collectible card games like *Magic* is that the latter often lack a rich fantasy background in which to set the action generated by the movement of cards in the game; but with Middle-earth the world is already in place, and even ICE's own existing *MEKP* modules can contribute to the enrichment and extension of this background. In this way, the card game and the roleplaying series can complement one another, as well as Tolkien's writings. It is also hoped that this kind of medium will have a wider audience within the (non-roleplaying) segment of world-wide Tolkien fandom.









PRODUCT REVIEWS

Wesley Frank
The Shire
(Realms of Middle-earth #2017)
Charlottesville, Virginia
Iron Crown Enterprises, 1995

The Shire deals with "Hobbits and their place in Middle-earth." The land, its inhabitants, their culture and their history are covered in detail in this large tome (while not as massive as *Arnor, The Shire* is a large work, at almost three hundred pages).

Following a brief introduction, the book dives straight into a history of the Hobbits and their lands, from their unknown origins midway through the Second Age to the establishment of the Reunited Kingdom in the early Fourth.

The original Hobbit homelands in the Anduin Vales are described, as is their gradual migration across the Misty Mountains into Eriador. More time is spent on Hobbit settlement in Eriador, and the troubled years leading up to the Shire-grant in T.A. 1600. The one and a half millennia history of the Shire is covered in detail, as well as a history of the Shire lands before the arrival of the Hobbits. Like all of ICE's Middle-earth products, the period centering on T.A. 1640 is described in greatest detail, but the late Third and early Fourth Age is also given substantial coverage.

The Hobbits' lifestyle, culture and habits are described in detail, with particular reference to playing Hobbit characters. As is fitting, the attitudes and prejudices of the Shire-hobbits are the major subjects covered. Other inhabitants of the Shire and its surrounding areas are presented largely in terms of their relationship to the Hobbits, as are the flora and fauna found in the region.

"Power and Politics" deals with the political relations between the Shire and its neighbors, with extra attention given to the standoff between the Shire-hobbits and the Arthadan House Tarma. House Tarma opposed the Shire-grant, and their conflicts with the Hobbits form the basis of many of the adventures found later in the book. Following the fall of Arthedain to the Witch-King, the Shire is an isolated and insular land, protected largely by the efforts of the Rangers, but is forced to deal with the outside world with the outbreak of the War of the Ring and the invasion by "Sharkey's Men." Hobbit relations with their neighbors during and after this time is dealt with briefly. Relations with other groups, including the Rivermen of the Baranduin, the Siranna Elves and the Dwarves of the Ered Luin are also dealt with.

"Magic, Magical Things and Weapons" covers typical Hobbitish attitudes to and uses for weapons, armor and magical artifacts. The section also lists various "mathoms" found in and around the Shire. The "mathoms" vary from trinkets and baubles through to some fairly powerful magical items, although in most cases the magic is either hidden or of a trivial nature. Hobbits' distrust of magic is noted and explained, as well as their distaste for martial pursuits.

"Personages of Note" covers the more important Hobbitish individuals from the mid-Third Age through to the War of the Ring. Important Men, Elves, Maiar and Faeries are also described. Complete *Rolemaster, MERP* and *Lord of the Rings Adventure Game* statistics are given for all individuals.

The "Gazetteer of Hobbit Lands" is divided into five sections: The Glennen (Anduin Vales) T.A. 500 to F.A. 20, Lands adjacent to the Shire Bounds, The Shire T.A. 1640, The Shire T.A. 3018 and The Near Wild T.A. 3018. These sections form the heart of *The Shire* and cover, at least briefly, just about every village and site in the Shire and surrounding areas, as well as older Hobbit settlements in the Kingsland, Cardolan and the Anduin Vales. Floorplans and descriptions of significant adventure sites are provided at the end of the gazetteer, as well as relevant NPC statistics. The floorplans and site descriptions are highly detailed, and run to about thirty pages.

Nine adventure scenarios are provided, each designed for Hobbit characters. The adventures are keyed to specific sites and situations described in earlier pages, including the confrontations with House Tarma, struggles with Orcs and other scenarios. The adventures are geared towards lower level characters, but this isn't a surprise, given the scarcity of 15th level Hobbit heroes! I can't comment a great deal on the adventures, as I have yet to play them out, but from reading through the material, I'd say that they will play out well.

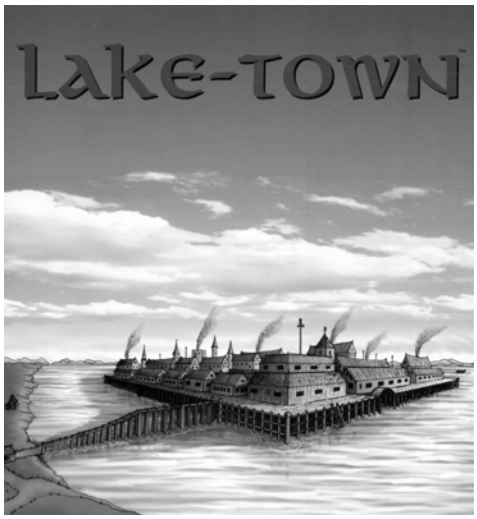
The Shire was a good read, as well as an excellent RPG resource. It is a large book, but its contents, illustrations and artwork are of a uniformly high quality. *The Shire* remains consistent with both the Tolkien legacy, and other materials published by ICE (particularly the *Arnor* Realm module). As a guide to adventuring in and around the Shire, I can't fault it. The Shire fits neatly into the spaces left by *Arnor.* With the addition of the forthcoming *Angmar* module, there will be complete coverage ot the entire area between the Gwathló and Forochel, and between the Ered Luin and the Misty Mountains. Personally, I would have like to have seen more material on the early Fourth Age, as I feel that this time period offers the most freedom for

gamemasters and players, but there is enough present to get by, and fill in any gaps.

Still, *The Shire* will not be suitable for all gamers or gamemasters. It is focused largely on Hobbit player characters, other races are somewhat restricted within the Shire, especially after the War of the Ring. Given its setting and material, *The Shire* would not be suitable for a high level campaign. Adventures that are challenging for a party of Hobbits would be ridiculously easy for a higher level party (particularly one with magic users). Unless you are (like me) a serious collector of anything labeled "Middle-earth," I would have to advise a high level roleplayer to give *The Shire* a miss.

Me, I loved it… but I'm biased (I have a long history of playing disturbed Hobbits). As a gamemaster, I found the book to provide just about everything I needed to run a Shire campaign. As a collector, I enjoyed it's high production quality and attention to detail. If you have an interest in the "furry-footed folk," or are planning a campaign in this part of Endor, *The Shire* is a must-have resource.

Reviewer: Michael Bailey



Zacharaiah Woolf
Lake-town
(Citadels of Middle-earth #2016)
Charlottesville, Virginia: Iron Crown Enterprises, 1995

The newest Middle-earth Citadel module, *Lake-town,* is as comprehensive as any yet published by Iron Crown Enterprises, providing gamers with adventure aplenty as they explore one of the more unique settings in Middle-earth. Author/designer Zachariah Woolf has left no stone unturned, providing an all-encompassing view of Lake-town, otherwise known as "Esgaroth on the Long Lake," which should be familiar to readers of *The Hobbit*.

The temporal setting for the module centers mainly upon T.A. 1640, less than live years after a deadly Great Plague has swept through Mirkwood and thence to Esgaroth, killing nearly half of the town's residents and disrupting its most important resource: trade. The author has taken the trouble to describe other eras in the region's history, courtesy of a timeline and historical overview of Lake-town. These make it possible to adventure in the town during the Third Age from the year 999 (the date of its founding) onward. For example, an entire page of possible scenarios is presented wherein characters interact with the Northron denizens ot Esgaroth during T.A. 3018, a time when the town was occupied by Easterlings.

Esgaroth is presented in its true context by describing it as a center of commercial activity. The population of seven hundred and seventy inhabitants makes its livelihood by engaging in barter and trade for money, since the town receives goods from a number of routes. The lower river Celduin towns bring foodstuffs and dyes, while Mirkwood's Wood Elves trade their lumber and crafts, not to mention the Dwarves of the Iron Hills selling gems and weapons. A ten-percent toll (known locally as the *blasting)* levied by Esgaroth's rulers ensures the town's prosperity.

Not surprisingly, if adventurers choose to interact with the townspeople, they will invariably encounter merchants (both wealthy and poor), smugglers, thieves, or the town guard (which numbers about 60 men on active duty). The author warns that players would do well to remember that Lake-town is a frontier settlement where nearly everyone carries and knows how to use weapons.

Perhaps the most impressive part of the module — not forgetting the splendid drawings and character portraits — are the concisely written descriptions of no less than seventy of Esgaroth's residents. All of the descriptions of these NPCs give the Gamemaster an understanding of a person's social standing, personality and physical size, adding to the extensive *MERP/Rolemaster* stats in the appendices.

From the word go, Woolf offers several adventure scenarios, including one in the first eleven pages of the module involving a murder mystery, whereby the characters try to uncover a major smuggling operation in the town. For those gamers interested in a sidebar adventure involving almost pure combat, the module includes the hunting of a legendary and fearsome beast inhabiting the waters of the Long Lake.

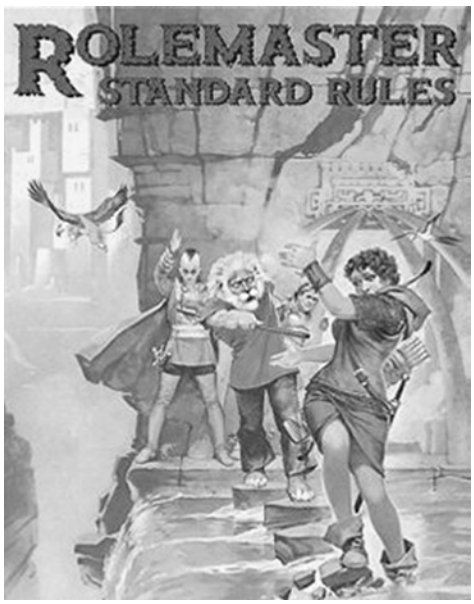
The Lake-men speak often of a Séahmatha (Northron for "Lake-serpent"), which recently claimed the lives of several fishermen who ventured out to an isolated part ot the lake. Anyone attempting to slay the monster (if indeed it can be found) should have the requisite combat and swimming skills in order to have a chance against the creature. Of course, if the adventurers are successful (and can show proof of such), they may expect to be handsomely rewarded by the townsfolk with money and renown throughout the region.

Other features of interest include an eight-page color-coded map of the town, as well as a large-scale map of the Long Lake, depicting all nearby encounter areas of note, including parts of Eastern Mirkwood and the town of Dale to the north. What interested me most, however, was a chapter at the end of the module devoted to special "Items of Note," which players may come across during their adventures. Items are classified three ways: Most Potent (very powerful magic); Potent; and Modest. These items, some ot which include powerful weapons which can shift the odds in any scenario in favor of the player-characters, can be used to great advantage, if indeed they are properly used.

In sum, then, Iron Crown has again published a module of the highest quality, definitely worth looking into for anyone interested in this important area and age of Middle-earth's history.

Reviewer: Gerrit Nuckton

Coleman Charlton, et al.



Rolemaster Standard Rules
(#5500)
Charlottesville, Virginia
Iron Crown Enterprises, 1995

I have to admit that I was deeply suspicious of this new edition of the *Rolemaster* system, but since I was in many ways dissatisfied with the existing rules (despite my numerous tinkerings), I had decided to indulge my gleeful storekeeper. My first thought upon getting the new rules was: Where did they dig up that cover from? Either Angus McBride has got very bored, or it is one of his earlier works that ICE had never got around to using.

ICE has made changes in one basic area: skill development. Anyone who has played *Rolemaster* will know that skill development is the heart of it, so this is not a mere repackaging of the old system. Skills are now developed in two ways: by category and by individual skills. For example, "Public Speaking" belongs to the "Influence" category. The cost of purchasing these skills is based not only on a characters class, but also their race/culture. This means that Dwarves, no matter what class, can purchase "Caving" (maneuvering in caves) cheaply, but "Swimming" is expensive. This is good.

ICE has also included some nifty bits to make the system more interesting. Different races/cultures receive money differently. For example, city tolk get silver coins, while nomads tend to have a nice horse or a couple of oxen. This is a nice touch, if perhaps not terribly important in die long run. I can just see the start of every campaign beginning with "Right, Nasche the Nomad goes to the markets and sells his oxen and gets two silver pieces. Good, now I can buy stuff." Some races/cultures also have access to special abilities for cheaper than other races/cultures. For example, Wood-elves can get a special affinity for maneuvering in woods for a cheap price. Also available are Training Packages.

There is also a new initiative system for combat. This has an advantage over every other initiative system for *Rolemaster:* it is actually usable! Basically, there are three ways to perform an action: snap, normal, or deliberate. A character is allowed up to one of each. Snap actions go first, but have a penalty; deliberate actions go last, but have a bonus. All very simple and fluid.Now, on to the problems. First of all, there are still too many skills. Why *Rolemaster* needs a "Tracking" skill and a "Read Tracks" skill has always eluded me. Similarly, there is "Scaling" and "Climbing." "Scaling" is climbing for long periods of time, whereas "Climbing" is climbing for short periods of time! Why have two skills!!!!!! I though this sort to thing would be fixed in the new system, but evidently there is a climbing expert at ICE who is just determined that there is a huge difference between the two. Secondly, there are serious problems with the editing of the skills section. For example; "Sailing" is not included in the skill index, nor is "Transcend Armor." The early parts of the skill organization system were utterly incomprehensible to me for the first several readings. It was only after reading the entire skill development section that I had any idea of what they were on about. I am a very trusting person, and so believed the writers when they said that all this would become clear as I read further; but if I were a new player, I would have taken the book back to the storekeeper and asked for a copy in English, please.

My last gripe is probably typical of an experienced gamer. The writers were particularly joyful about announcing that there would be more training packages, spells and other stuff in upcoming expansions! Hang on, I thought, I brought this new system to get away from all the expansions I already have. I know I am going to buy these expansions, but I still feel a bit sore that instead of including many more ideas in the core rules, they are going to charge me more money for another book (no doubt with more copies of the same pictures ICE has been using for the last century).

Still, in the final analysis I am going to use these new rules. They are a huge improvement, and include other cool bits that I have not mentioned as they are particularly technical. I have to say, however, that if ICE wants to attract new players to this very good system they have to make it much more attractive, both inside and out, and clear up the editing problems. My last word is this: I live way down the bottom of the world, and get charged more than just about anyone else for gaming products, but this one was still worth it.

Reviewer: Sam Daish

Mythcon, the annual Mythopoeic Conference, meets every summer in late July or early August on a college campus to bring together readers, scholars, and students of the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams (the writers known as The Inklings), and the genres of myth and fantasy. Not quite either an academic conference or a science fiction & fantasy convention, Mythcon partakes of the best aspects of both. About 200 attendees gather to read and listen to papers, participate in panel discussions, discuss books and many other things over meals and late into the night, admire and purchase books and artwork, celebrate the Guests of Honor and the winners of the Mythopoeic Awards at the formal Banquet, wear fantasy-inspired costumes during the grand Procession and the Masquerade, and participate in the many honored and often silly Mythcon traditions.

Mythcon XXVII will be held July 26-29, 1996 (Friday-Monday), in beautiful Colorado on the campus of the University of Colorado, Boulder, not far from Denver. The theme of this Mythcon, our first gathering in the shadows of the Rocky Mountains, will be "The Inklings and Nature." The Artist Guest of Honor will be Ted Nasmith, renowned for his beautiful art on many a Tolkien Calendar, including the 1996 edition, who will be holding a special exhibit of his original artwork. The Scholar Guest of Honor will be Doris T. Meyers, retired Professor of English at die University of Northern Colorado, and author of die award-winning study, C.S. LEWIS IN CONTEXT. A number of local fantasy authors are expected to attend, but arrangements have not been completed as of this posting.

Events will include numerous papers and panels and presentations, of course! Besides the special exhibit by Ted Nasmith, the conference will feature a special presentation on "Grief and Loss and the Artist" by psychoanalyst Richard Simons, M.D. In addition, there will be an art show, video program, game room, pun contest, masquerade, dramatic presentation, dealers room, auction, procession and opening ceremonies, banquet and awards ceremony, and a closing ceremony with the traditional Mythcon songs.

MEMBERSHIP: The Registration fee is $49, payable to Mythcon XXVII. Prices for the Room and Board package (3 nights lodging and 8 meals including the banquet, in single or double rooms) will be available later. Write to: Mythcon XXVII, CO. Box 3849, Littleton CO 80161-3849. People interested in presenting papers should send inquiries and proposals to: Dr. Douglas Burger, Dept. Of English, Campus Box 226, University of Colorado, Boulder CO 80309.

Mythcons are sponsored by The Mythopoeic Society, and international literary and educational organization devoted to the study, discussion, creation, and enjoyment of myth, fantasy, and imaginative literature. Besides the annual conferences, the Society sponsors three magazines — MYTHLORE, a quarterly journal; MYTHPRINT, a monthlv bulletin of news and reviews; and THE MYTHIC CIRCLE, a three-yearly magazine of fiction and poetry. The Society also sponsors regular local discussion groups across the U.S., and several special interest groups on Tolkien's linguistics, children's fantasy, book discussion by mail, and a category of topics on the Science Fiction Roundtable of the GEnie BBS. For general information on the Society, write PO. Box 6707, Altadena CA 91003, or contact Joan Marie Verba, Corresponding Secretary, at j.verbal@genic.geis.com.

«the eye was rimmed with fire...
and the black slit of its pupil opened
on a pit, a window into nothing.»

-the lord of the rings

A collectible card game
coming in late 1995 from ICE.

Herbs & Spells

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Hi all you gamers. The following herb list was done for several reasons, the main being that I found the list in the MERP *manual was good but by no means comprehensive. I also found that by being on two pages it was harder to view and I thought that I could do a better job. I've gone through all the old modules that ICE has released and added all the more "useful" herbs to it while trying to keep it to one page. Deciding which were "useful" and which weren't was an interesting task. I have a much bigger list of herbs and I'm still looking for more herbs to include; so if you have may please e-mail them to me. Things to add could be an addiction factor, a bigger description of it's effects and a general cleanup of where it's found and cost. Where I found duplication of herbs I tended to average their cost and some even had different effects so again I used the most "useful."*

Name	Found	Form	Cost	Effect
Bone Repair				
Arfandas	cF5NW	stem/a	2sp	*2 healing of fractures
Balaak	hO5S	stalk/b	45gp	will heal the worst shattered breaks
Boneset	tM4W	root/ca	14gp	* 3 healing of fractures
Bursthelas	tS7	stalk/b	110gp	repairs bones/joints
Edram	cF6	moss/i	31gp	mends bone
Burn Relief				
Alambas	mS3SW	gras/a	l0gp	heals 4 sq feet third degree burns
Aloe	tH4U	leaf/a	5bp	*2 healing of burns/cuts, mild anaesthetic
Culkas	aZ4	leaf/a	35gp	heals 10 sq feet of burns
Jojojopo	fM4	leaf/a	9sp	cures frostbite, heals 2-20 from cold
Kelventari	tT3U	berry/a	19gp	heals 3rd burns, heals dlO/scars
Circulatory Repair				
Anserke	hO6	root/a	75gp	stops bleeding, takes 3 rnds
Belan	hO5	nu/i	40gp	stops bleeding, takes d 10 rnds
Goldern Cress	mF4W	herb/ca	4gp	stops bleeding 1-5, wounds won't reopen
Harry	sS6	resin/a	150gp	immediately stops bleeding
Rumareth	import-E	mix/b		stops bleeding, drowsiness
Tulaxar	tH4N	leaves/b	75gp	stops bleeding
Concussion Relief				
Akbutege	hS6S	leaf/ea	5gp	heals 1-10
Arksau	mT4C	sap/a	12gp	heals 2-12, *2 healing of wounds, antiseptic
Arlan	tT6W	leaf/a	13sp	heals 4-9
Arman'umas	leaf/cr/a			*2 healing, reduces swelling
Darsurion	cM3U	leaf/a	3sp	heals 1-6
Draaf	sO2	leaf/i	5sp	heals 1-10
Chamomile	mS4W	flower/br	7gp	sleep 2-12 hrs, *3 healing
Gariig	aZ3	cactus/i	55gp	heals 30
Gefnul	cV5	lichen/i	90gp	heals 100
Harwite	mD2M	moss/ap	lgp	heals 5-50
Madarch	mU6NW	mix/li	l00gp	warms, heals all cuts/bleeding in 1-2 hrs
Mirenna	cM3U	berry/i	10gp	heals 10 (can hold in mouth)
Reglen	tU4	moss/b	75gp	heals 50, calms
Rewk	tD3	nodule/b	9sp	heals 2-20
Thurl	tD1	clove/b	1sp	heals 1-4
Winclamit	cC7N	fruit/i	100gp	heals 3-300
Yavethalion	mO5	fruit/i	45gp	heals 5-50
General Purpose				
Arlian's Slipper	cM7U	root/b	lbp	+ 20RR vs. colds, undead:-40 vs morale
Arthond	cM2	roof!	5bp	+ 20RRvs colds, *5 healing of respiratory
Arunya	mS3U	root/b	4sp	lvl 11, sleep/unconsciousness, addictive
Athelas	tC5W	leaf/b	200gp	can cure anything in the hands of a king
Attanar	tF4U	moss/a	8gp	cures fever
Avhail	mS2M	fruit/ca	3bp	mutes hunger, restores from starvation
Baranie	tH5N	leaves/b	2bp	reduces nausea by 75%
Blue Pine	cC2NW	nut/ea	lcp	5 seeds equal to a meal of preserved rations
Bodezlist	sH3S	tissuc/ca	4gp	flower's heart equals one day's water
Bog-land Grass	mS 1W	fibers/weave	1bp	tough fibers, waterproof ropes and baskets
Boskone	tH8	powder/i	78gp	'Awareness'10-20 rnds, addictive, withdrawal
Caj	sH5S	nodule/b	10gp	PP recovered in half time, 5% of death
Carnerem	tS5	leaf/a	40gp	delays poison effects for 24 hrs
Culan	sA7S	mix/b	50gp	anti-spasmodic, vs some poisons
Delrean	cC2NW	bark/a	3sp	repels insects (Lvl 7), smells foul
Din Fuinen	mD6W	resin/in	25gp	amnesia 1 -100 days, not permanent
Dragul	hD4S	root/b	25gp	aware, +10 to all perceptions
Elendils Spear	tH4N	roo/b	8gp	slows poison by 10, purify water 5 gallons
Eyebright	tA6W	flowcr/b	3gp	+10 perception, 50' infravision, 1 hour
Faghiu	fM9NW	flower/b	330gp	serves or loves giver for 1100 days
Feduilas	mD5NW	flower/sm	11sp	+20 RR Essence/Mental ATs 1-5 hrs, AG/QU at-10
Felmather	mO5	leaf/i	105gp	mental sumons a friend, relieves coma
Flur Rort	Dunland	flower/li		antidote for nerve poisons (12th lvl)
Gloriosa	mD7W	lichen/a	10gp	glows, if applied to blade will cut rock
Goodwort	mF6W	seed/li	23gp	bolsters good+10 morale, confusion & dizzines to evil creatures (-50), d4 hrs
Harlindar	import	mix/b		safe childbirth
Haruella	mD7NW	mix/d	250gp	Pinnath Ceren, undead: +30 RRvs Fear, cold/draining ATs, *2 repelling
Kiscoboba	sH1S	berry/ca	1sp	desert, no thirst sensations
Latha	cF4N	stem/b	10sp	+10RRvs disease, cures colds, heals 12
Lemsang	tU5NW	mushroom/i	4gp	a purple 'fur'; a pound = 1 month rations
Maiana	herbalist	mix/b		decongestant, halves effects
Margath	herbalist	mix/p		anaesthetic
Melandar	cF3	moss/b	12sp	+10RR disease d10 days
Menelar	cC5	cone/b	65gp	cures any non-mental disease
Nethandon	mM5NW	any/ca	lgp	"stomach pump", vs ingested poisons
Rose Tree	mD7W	nectar/a	50gp	poison antidote,+25 to enchantments
Sailcha	tS8NW	flower/wear	50gp	+10 morale/RRs, + 5 DB, 3-7 days
Silraen	mS3NW	powder/b	35sp	analgesic(25% pain), drowsiness 4-5 hrs
Teldalion	tD3NW	bark/p	5gp	reduces inflammation, cures infections
Ul-Naza	eW7	leaf/i	450gp	poison antidote, 1 day
Ur	fH3	nutf/i	3gp	1 days food
Wight Orchid	tA8W	root/ea	300gp	mind/soul leave body, 10 mile range. RR every mile, failure 51 + soul is lost
Life Perservation				
Degiik	hO5	leaf/i	100gp	lifekeeping, 1 day
Laurelin	mO9	lea/i	999gp	lifegiving for elves, 28 days
Lothfelag	mU9NW	flower/ea	1000gp	heals; preserves living tissue, absolves pain, can even give back a lost life
Oiolosse	fF8	clove/i	600gp	lifegiving for elves, 7 days
Olvar	IO6	flower/i	200gp	lifekeeping, 2d10 days
Pargen	hJ8	berry/i	800gp	lifegiving, 4 days
Pathur	aH4	nodule/i	35gp	lifekeeping, 1 hr
Tyr-tira	fA9U	leaf/i	1200gp	lifegiving, 56 days
Muscle, Cartilage Repair				
Arnuminas	mS2NW	leaf/a	6bp	* 2 healing ligament/cartilage/muscle
Arpsusar	tF5	stalk/b	30gp	mends muscles
Curfalaka	hD6S	fruit/ea	5gp	heals muscles
Dagmather	sS5	spine/b	28gp	heals cartilage
Ebur	mO4	flower/i	22gp	repairs sprains
Nerve Repair				
Belramba	sC6	lichen/b	60gp	repairs nerves
Gorfon	cA7	fruit		sleep for 10-20 hrs, all damage healed
Terbas	mD3	leaf/a	2gp	*2 healing of nerves
Organ Repair				
Aldaka	cM5	root/b	102gp	restores sight
Asp Glands	mD2C	glands/ea	100gp	organ restorer; madness-passes in an hour
Berterin	mD3	moss/b	19gp	preservative 1 day
Febfendu	cF4	root/b	90gp	restores hearing
Gildarion	import	mix/p		organ repair, rare
Númemelos	Gondor	moss/a	300gp	The White Tree, nerve regen, organ repair
Siran	sS6	clove/i	80gp	restores 1 organ, skin disease
Siriena	sS5	grass/a	70gp	preservative 1 week
Tarnas	hJ6	nodule/b	220gp	repairs organs

Physical Enhancement

Atigax	fH4	root/b	40gp	protects eyes, 9 hrs
Breldiar	mV4	flower/i	25gp	-30 vs MM/OB,+50 to spells/missile ATs, 1 hr, addicitive
Elbens Basket	mS4NW	root/b	3gp	heart stimulant, haste 1 rnd
Gylvir	mO5	algae/i	45gp	breathe underwater, 4 hrs
Hiam Moss	cC6NW	fungus/b	9gp	stimulant 24 hrs, requires rest
Kathkusa	fW3	leaf/i	50gp	*2 STR, + 10 OB, *2 hits, d10 rnds
Kilmakur	hS5	root/b	65gp	protects vs flame/heat, d10 hrs
Klagul	sS3	bud/b	27gp	elf sight, 6 hrs
Megillos	cM3	leaf/i	12sp	inc's smell/sight, 10 mins
Sha	cH7NW	flower/i	10gp	15 rnds infravision, 45 days cramps
Yaran	tS2	pollen/i	9sp	acute smell/taste, 1 hr
Zulsendura	aU4	mushroon/i	70gp	haste, 3 rnds
Zur	cU4	fungus/b	12gp	enhances smell/hearing, 1 hr

Stat Modifiers

Lestagii	aZ9	bud/i	520gp	restores stats losses
Merrig	sS5	thorn/b	2gp	inc's PR/AP +5, addiction

Stun Relief

Lainimit	hD2S	leaf/ea	lgp	stun relief, 3 rnds
Suranie	tF3SW	berry/i	2gp	stun relief, 1 rnd (can hold in mouth)
Vinuk	sS4	root/i	4gp	stun relief, d10 rnds
Welwal	mF4	leaf/i	12gp	stun relief, 2 rnds (can hold in mouth)
Witan	hJ6S	leaf/i	12gp	stun relief, 2 rnds

Poison

Acaana	fM7	flower/p	600gp	lvl 10, instantly
Asp venom	mT3C	Asp/p	23gp	lvl 5, limb loss
Black Vine	cC9NW	leaf/i	205gp	M 7, euphoria 1-100 hrs
Camadarch	cU9C	mushroom/b	75gp	lvl 6, blue skin, body rot
Dynallca	hF3	leaf/p	14gp	lvl 3, hearing, d 10 hits
Galenaana	cA6	leaf/po	179gp	Ivl 6, kills elves, coma others
Jegga	mU5	bats/p	92gp	lvl 7, 1-100 hits
Jitsu	mO4	clams/li	34gp	lvl 5, 1-50 hits
Juth	aZ5	scorpion/li	41gp	lvl 2, insanity
Karfar	hJ4S	leaf/p	142gp	lvl 7, kills 2d6 rnds
Kly	sH5	berry/p	154gp	lvl 3,3-300 hits
Klytun	sB4S	root/p	53gp	lvl 5, dl0 day coma
Lawrim	fM7NW	lichen/b	25gp	lvl 3, pain d10 rnds, paralysis d10 hrs
Lus	tT3	flower/p	31gp	lvl 4, d12 rnds
Silmaana	mT2	stalk/p	4gp	lvl 9,2d 10 hits
Slota	tD7	spider/p	36gp	lvl 5, paralysis & death
Taynaga	cC5	bark/po	27gp	lvl 8, 5-50 hits, sterilizies
Uraana	tS3	leaf/p	12gp	lvl 6,3-30 hits
Zaganzar	tM6	root/li	139gp	lvl 2, blinds, d10 hits
Worlclivur	tO5	lichen/a		lvl 4, effects eyes

Intoxicants

Ancalthur	tF	stem/li/a		time sense warped for 2-4 hrs (-50+)
Brorkwilb	mV4	flower/i	9gp	euphoric, shared family dreams, V addictive
Chrume	tU4	mushroom/i	15sp	euphoric stimulant, easily distracted
Ecsasse	mH6	clove/b	20gp	stimulant/hallucinogen, friendly, mind AT
Feduilas	tH6NW	flower/sm	11sp	relaxant,+20RRvs Essence 1-5 hrs, AG-10
Gort	mF5	leaves/in	10gp	hallucinogen, + 10 PR 2 hrs,-50 d 10 hrs
Hoak-foer	sS3	flower/i	67gp	hallucinogen, cures mind loss/diseases but prevents movement for d10 weeks
Kirtir	mT5NW	buds/ea	5gp	stimulant, AG +10 1 hr, CON-30 d10 hrs
Lu Jy Mirenna	fA7	berry/i	100gp	powerful hallucinogen, visions - beneficial, frequent use perilous
Nelisse	sV5	leaf/b	9sp	euphoria (-50) for 1 hr, 1 days food
Pipeweed	mS3U	leaf/sm	4sp	addictive ? relaxant -10 for 1 -2 hrs
Tartiella	tF4NW	weed/sm	4sp	relaxant, all stats -10 d 10 hrs, happy
Temsanc	Arnor	mushroom/li		increascs effects of alcohol, common

FOUND: a=arid, s=semi-arid, h=hot/humid, m = mild, t=cool, c=cold, f= frigid, c=everlasting cold

G=glacier, A=apline, M=mountain, H=heath/scrub, C=coniferous, D=deciduous, J=jungle, S=short grass, T=tall grass, B=breaks/wadis, W=waste, Z=desert, I=freshwater banks, O=ocean banks, V=volcanic, U=underground

1 = + 30, 2 = + 20, 3= +10, 4= +0, 5 = -IO, 6=-20,7=-30, 8=-50, 9=-70

FORM: a=apply (d10 rnds), b=brew (20 rnds), in=inhale, p=paste, sm=smoke, po=powder, li=liquid, ea=eat, i = ingest, d=drink

COMPASS CODE: N, S, E, W, SW SE, NE, NW, U=universal, C=central Endor

Spells

ESSENCE HAND (Open Ess)

Vibrations (F) ..... (5lb) (1 min/lvl) (100') (RR break/fumble)
Shield (F*) ..... (self) (1 min/lvl) (self) (+25 DB)
Staying (F) ..... (5 lb) (1 min/lvl) (100')
Telekinesis (Fc) ..... (5 lb) (1 min/lvl) (100') (11km/hr)
Deflections (F*) ..... (1 Missile) (-) (100') (-100 OB MIS)
Vibrations (F) ..... (20 lb) (1 min/lvl) (100')
Bladeturn (F*) ..... (1 AT) (-) (100') (-100 OB AT)
Staying (F) ..... (20 lb) (1 min/lvl) (100')
Telekinesis (Fc) ..... (20 lb) (1 min/lvl) (100')
Aiming (F*c) ..... (1 MIS) (1 rnd) (1 AT) (+50 OB MIS)

SPIRIT MASTERY (Open Ess)

Sleep V (F)..... (varies) (varies) (100') (5 lvls)
Charm Kind (F)..... (1 Target) (1hr/lvl)(100')
Sleep VII (F)..... (varies)(varies)(100')(7 lvls)
Confusion (F)..... (1 Target)(varies)(100')(lrnd/SptRRtail)
Suggestion (F)..... (1 Target)(varies)(100')
Sleep X(F)..... (varics)(varics)(100")
Hold Kind (Fc)..... (1 Target)(Q(100')(25%MM)
Master of Kind (F)..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(50')
True Charm (F)..... (1 Target)(1hr/lvl)(100')
Quest (F)..... (1 Target)(varies)(10')

ESSENCE WAYS (Open Ess)

Detect Essence (Pc) ..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(100')
Text Analysis I (Ic) ..... (text)(1min/lvl)(self)
Detect Channel (Pc) ..... (5'R)(1min/1vl)(100)
Detect Invisible (Pc) ..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(100')(AT-50)
Detect Traps (Pc) ..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(100')(75%)
Text Analysis II (Ic) ..... (text)(1min/lvl)(self)
Detect Evil (Pc) ..... (5'R) (1min/lvl)(100')
Location (Pc) ..... (1 target)(1min/lvl)(100')

ILLUSIONS (Open Ess)

Sound Mirage (E) ..... (10'R)(10min/lvl)(100')
Unseen (E) ..... (1 Target)(24hr)(10')
Light Mirage (E) ..... (10'R)(10min/lvl)(100')
Invisibility (E) ..... (1 Target)(24hr)(10')
T/S Mirage (E) ..... (10'R)(10min/lvl)(100')
Illusion II (E) ..... (varies) (varies) (varies)
Phantasm I (Ec) ..... (10'R)(1min/lvl)(100')
Invisibility (E)..... (10'R)(24hr)(10')
Illusion III (E) ..... (varies)(varies)(varies)
Phantasm II (Ec) ..... (varies)(varies)(varies)

UNBARRING WAYS (Open Ess)

Lock(F)..... (1 lock)(-)(100')
Magic Lock (F)..... (1 door)(1min/lvl)(touch)
Locklore(I)..... (1 lock)(-)(touch)(+20,+ 10)
Opening I (F)..... (1 lock)(-)(touch)(20%,40% magical)
Traplore(I)..... (1 trap)(touch)(+20,+ 10)
Disarm I (F)..... (1 trap)(-)(touch) (20%,40% magical)
Jamming (F) ..... (1 door)(P)(50')
Weakening (F) ..... (1 door)(P)(50')

ESSENCE PERCEPTIONS (Open Ess)

Familiar (P) ..... (1 target) (P) (touch)
Presence I (P*c)..... (10'R)(lrnd/lvl)(self)
Listen (Uc)..... (varies) (1min/lvl)(10')
Presence III (P*c) ..... (30'R)(l rnd/lvl)(self)
Long Ear (Uc) ..... (varies) (1min/lvl)(100')
Watch (Uc) ..... (varies) (1min/lvl)(10')
Long Eye (Uc) ..... (varies) (1min/lvl)(100')
Observe (Uc) ..... (varies) (1min/lvl)(100')

PHYSICAL ENHANCEMENT (Open Ess)

Resist Heat (U) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(200F, +10RR vs Heat)
Resist Cold (U) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(-30F, +10RR vs Cold)
Sly Ears (U) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10')(*2 Hearing)
Balance (U*) ..... (1 Target)(1 Maneuver)(10')(+50MM)
Night Vision (U) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10')(100' night vision)
Sidevision (U) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10')(300° vision)
Sounding (U) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10')(vol. *3)
Watervision (U) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10')(100'R vision)
Waterlungs (U) ..... (1 Target) (10min/lvl)(10')
Gaslungs(U) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10')

SPELL WAYS (Open Ess)

Spell Store (U) ..... (1 Spell)(varies)(self)
Cancel Essence (F*c) ..... (self)(C)(self)
Rune I (F) ..... (1 Sheet)(varies)(touch)
Cancel Channel (F*c) ..... (self)(C)(self)
Rune II (F) ..... (1 Sheet)(varies)(touch)
Dispel Essence (F*)..... (10'R)(C)(self)(+30RR)
Rune III (F)..... (1 Sheet)(varies)(touch)
Dispel Channel (F*)..... (10'R)(C)(self)(+30RR)
RuneV(F)..... (1 Sheet)(varies)(touch)
Sign of Stunning (F) ..... (1cu')(varies)(touch)(10min/10pt RR fail)

LIVING CHANGE (Mage)

Run (F*)..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10')(*2 MM)
Speed I (F*)..... (1 Target)(1 rnd)(10')(200%MM)
Self Size Chg(F) ..... (self) (1min/lvl) (self) (+/- 50% size)
Sprint (F*) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10)(*3 MM)
Change of Kind (F) ..... (1 Target)(10min/lvl)(10)(10% change)
Haste I (F*) ..... (1 Target)(1 rnd)(10')

LOFTY BRIDGE (Mage)

Leaping (U*) ..... (1 Target)(1 rnd)(100')(S01>/20'^)
Landing(U*)..... (1 Targct)(untillands)(I00')(-20'/lvl)
Leaving (U) ..... (1 Target)(-)(10')(100'R, no barriers)
Levitation (U) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(10'/rnd)
Fly(U)..... (1Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(75'/rnd)
Portal (U) ..... (3'x6'x3)(1rnd/lvl)(touch)
Fly (U)..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(150'/rnd)
Long Door (U)..... (1 Target)(-)(10')(100'R)
Leaving (U) ..... (1 Target)(-)(10')(300'R)
Teleport(U)..... (1 Target)(-)(10')(%error,10miles/lvl)

FIRE LAW (Mage)

Boil Liquid (Fc) ..... (1 cu'/lvl)(P)(10')
Warm Solid (Fc) ..... (1 cu'/lvl)(24hr)(10')(100F)
Woodfires(F)..... (1'R)(-)(1')
Wall of Fire (E) ..... (10'x10'x6")(1rnd/lvl)(100')(A crit)
Heat Solid (Fc) ..... (1cu'/lvl)(1hr)(10')(50F, +100F/rnd)
Fire Bolt (E) ..... (1 Target)(-)(100')
Call Flame (E)..... (10'x10'x10')(1rnd/lvl)(10')(A crit)
Fire Ball (E) ..... (10'R)(-)(100)
Aura of Flame (E) ..... (1 Obj) (1rnd/lvl) (touch) (B crit)
Circle Aflame (E)..... (10'Rxl0'x6")(1rnd/lvl)(self)(A crit)

EARTH LAW (Mage)

Enchanted Rope (Fc)..... (1 Rope)(C)(10'/lvl)(no AT)
Loosen Earth (F)..... (100cu')(P)(100')
Crush Stone (F) ..... (2"x2"x2")(-)(100')
Earthwall(F) ..... (10'xl0'x1.5')(1min/lvl)(100')(10rnds)
Cracks Call (F) ..... (1000cu')(-)(100')
Stonewall (E)..... (10'x10'x1')(lmin/lvl)(100')
Stone/Earth (F)..... (100cu')(P)(100')
EarthwallTrue(E)..... (10'x10'x1')(P)(100')
Earth/Mud (F) ..... (100cu')(P)(100')
Earth/Stone (F)..... (100cu')(P)(100')

WATER LAW (Mage)

Condensation (Fc)..... (cu' water)(P)(touch)(-)(1rnd-> 10min)
Fog Call (F)..... (10'R/lvl)(P)(10'/lvl)(-S0OBMIS)
Water Wall (Ec)..... (10x10'x1')(C)(100')(-40MM,-80 OB AT)
Water Bolt (E) ..... (1 Target)(-)(100')
Unfog(F) ..... (10'R)(P)(100')
Calm Water (Fc) ..... (100'R)(C)(100')
WaterWallTrue(E)..... (10'xl0'x1')(lmin/lvl)(100')
Clean Water (F)..... (1000cu')(P)(100')
Water Bolt (E) ..... (1 Target)(-)(300')
Call Rain (F)..... (100'R/lvl)(10min/lvl)(100'/lvl)

WIND LAW (Mage)

Breeze Call (Fc)..... (20'cone)(1rnd/lvl)(self)(-30 OB MIS)
Airwall(Fc) ..... (10'x10'x3')(C)(100')(-25MM,-S0OB AT)
Condensation (Fc)..... (cu'watcr)(P)(touch)(-)(1rnd->10min)
Stun Cloud (F) ..... (5'R)(6 rnds)(10')(CCBBAA crits/RR)
Airstop(Fc) ..... (10'R)(C)(100')
Stun Cloud (F) ..... (10'R)(6 rnds)(20')(CCBBAA crits/RR)
Vacuum (F) ..... (5'R)(-)(100)(B crit/RR)
Airstop(Fc) ..... (20'R)(C)(100')
Stun Cloud (F) ..... (20'R)(6 rnds)(40')(CCBBAA crits/RR)
Death Cloud (E) ..... (5'R)(10 rnd)(10')(EEDDCCBBAA crits/RR)

LIGHT LAW (Mage)

Projected Light (Fc)..... (50' beam) (10min/lvl) (self)
Shock Bolt (E)..... (1 Target)(-)(100')
Light I (F)..... (10'R)(10min/lvl)(touch)
Shade (F) ..... (100'R)(10min/lvl)(100')(hide+25)
Sudden Light (F) ..... (10'R)(-)(100')(1rnd/5pt RR fail)
Dark(F)..... (10'R)(10min/lvl)(touch)
Light V(Fc) ..... (50'R)(10min/lvl)(touch)(vary radius)
Shock Bolt (E)..... (1 Target)(-)(300')
Dark (Fc)..... (50'R)(10min/lvl)(touch)(vary radius)
Lightning Bolt (E) ..... (1 Target)(-)(100')(300'R)

ICE LAW (Mage)

Freeze Liquid (Fc) ..... (1 cu'/lvl)(P)(10')(-30F)
Cool Solid (Fc)..... (1 cu'/lvl)(24hr)(10')(-20F)
Wall of Cold (E) ..... (10'x 10'x 1') (1rnd/lvl) (100') (A crit)
Cool Air (Ec)..... (1000cu'/lvl)(1hr)(100')(-20F, -10F/rnd)
Chill Solid (Fc)..... (1cu'/lvl)(1hr)(10')(-200F)(-100F/rnd)
Ice Bolt (E) ..... (1 Target) (-)(100')
Cold Ball (E)..... (20'R)(-)(100')
Wall of Ice (E) ..... (10'x10'x1')(P)(100')(100HP, 50rnds)
Call Cold (E) ..... (20'x20'x20')(1rnd/lvl)(10')(A crit)
Circle of"Cold (E)..... (20'Rx20'x1')(1rnd/lvl)(self)(l00HP, 50rnds)

ITEM LORE (Bard)

Jewel/Metal Ass. (I)..... (1 objcct)(-)(touch)(within 10%)
Item Assessment (I) ..... (1 object)(-)(touch)
Detect Power (I)..... (1 object)(-)(touch)
Item Analysis (I)..... (1 object)(-)(touch)(10%)
Assessment True (I) ..... (1 objcct)(-)(touch)
Significance (I)..... (1 objcct)(-)(touch)

SOUND CONTROL (Bard)

Long Whisper (F*c)..... (1 point)(C)(50'/lvl)
Silence (F) ..... (10'R)(1min/lvl)(self)
Song Sounding II (F*)..... (1 song)(as song)(2* range)
Song II (F*) ..... (2 Targets)(as song)(as song)
Sonic Law (Fc) ..... (10'R)(C)(self)
Great Song (F*)..... (10'R)(as song)(as song)

CONROLLING SONGS (Bard)

Calm Song (Fc)..... (1 target)(C)(50')(no ATs)
Holding Song (Fc) ..... (1 target)(C)(50')(25%)
Stun Song (Fc) ..... (1 target)(C)(50')
Silent Song (Fc) ..... (1 target)(C)(50')
Sleep Song (Fc) ..... (1 target)(C)(50')
Charm Song (Fc) ..... (1 target)(C)(50')(3 rnds, lasts 10mins)

LORE (Bard)

Study I (Uc)..... (self)(C)(-)(photographic memory)
Learn Language (Uc)..... (self)(C)(-)(*2 learning)
Language Lore (I)..... (1 text) (-) (touch) (language and author)
Minds Lore I (P) ..... (1 target)(1 rnd)(50')(10% per subject)
Study II (Uc)..... (self)(C)(-)(as Study I, *2 reading)
Interpreting Ear (Pc)..... (1 speakcr)(C)(-)

DETECTION MASTERY (Open Cha)

Detect Channel (Pc)..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(50')
Detect Essence (Pc) ..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(50')
Detect Evil (Pc)..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(50')
Detect Curse (Pc) ..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(50')
Location (Pc) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(100')
Detect Traps (Pc)..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(50')(75%)

PROTECTIONS (Open Cha)

Prayer (U) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(100')(+10RR/MM)
Bless (U) ..... (1 Target)(1mm/lvl)(100')(+10DB/MM)
Resistance (U)..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(1001)(+5RR/DB)
Resist Elements (U) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(100')(+20RR/DB)
Plant Facade (E) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)
Underwater Breath (U) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)

SOUND/LIGHT WAYS (Open Cha)

Projected Light (F) ..... (SO'beam) (lOmhYlvl) (self)
Speech I (Pc) ..... (1 Target)(C)(10')
Light (F) ..... (10'R)(10min/lvl)(touch)
Quiet(F) ..... (1'R)(1min/lvl)(100')
Sudden Light (F) ..... (10'R)(-)(100)(1 rnd/5 pt RR fail)
Speech II (Pc) ..... (1 Target)(C)(10')

NATURE'S MOEMENT (Open Cha)

Limbwalking (F) ..... (self)(1 min/lvl)(self)
Waterwalking (F) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)(50'/rnd)
Swimming (F*) ..... (self)(5min/lvl)(self)
Sandrunning (F) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)
Merging Organic (F) ..... (self)(lmin/lvl)(self)(1' deep)
Limbrunning (F) ..... (self)(lmin/lvl)(self)

SURFACE WAYS (Open Cha)

Heal 10 (U) ..... (1 Target)(P)(touch)(d10HP)
Frost/Burn Rel. I (U) ..... (1 burn)(P)(touch)(1st degree)
Stun Relief I (U*) ..... (1 Target) (P) (touch)(1rnd)
Regeneration I (Uc*) ..... (1 Target)(C)(touch)(1HP/rnd)
Frost/Burn Rel. II (U) ..... (varies)(P)(touch)(2nd degree)
Awakening (U) ..... (1 Target)(P)(touch)

NATURE'S LORE (Open Cha)

Trap Detection (Pc) ..... (5'R)(lmin/lvl)(10')
Nature's Awareness (Ic) ..... (100'R)(C)(selt)
Storm Prediction (I) ..... (lmi/lvl)(-)(sclf)(9S%)
Weather Prediction (I) ..... (lmi/lvl)(-)(seli)(95%)
Nature's Awareness (Ic) ..... (300'R)(C)(sclt)
Breeze Call (F) ..... (20'conc)(lmd/lvl)(sclf)(-30OBMIS)

CALM SPIRITS (Open Cha)

Calm I (F) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(100')(no AT)
Calm II (F) ..... (2Targets)(1min/lvl)(100')(no AT)
Hold Kind (Fc) ..... (1 Target)(C)(100')(25%MM)
Long Calm(F) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(300')(no AT)
Stunning (F*) ..... (1 Target)(varies)(50')(1 rnd/10 pt RR fail)
Calm III (F) ..... (3Targets)(1min/lvl)(100')

SPELL DEFENCE (Open Cha)

Protection I (P) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(+10RR,-10 E Spell
ATs) Area Protection I (Pc) ... (10'R)(1min/lvl)(10')(+10RR, -10 E Spell ATs)
Neutralise Curse (F) ..... (1 Curse)(1min/lvl)(touch)(-20RR)
Protection II (P) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(+20RR, -20 E Spell ATs)
Area Protection II (Pc) ..... (10'R)(1min/lvl)(10')(+20RR, -20 E Spell ATs)
Remove Curse (F) ..... (1 Curse)(P)(touch)

PURIFICATIONS (Animist)

PurifyFoodAVater(P) ..... (1'R)(-)(10')
Detect Disease (Pc) ..... (5'R)(lmin/lvl)(100')
Disease Purify (P) ..... (1 Target) (P)(10')
Detect Poison (Pc) ..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(100')
Poison Purify (P) ..... (1 Target)(P)(10')
Disease Resistance (U) ..... (1 Target)(1min/lvl)(10')(extra RR)

ANIMAL MASTERY (Animist)

Animal Sleep (F) ..... (1 Animal)(lmin/lvl)(100')
Cloaking (E) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)(+30hide)
Summons I (Fc) ..... (-)(1min)(100')(1 animal)
Animal Tongues (U) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(100')
Animal Mastery (Fc) ..... (1 Animal) (C)(100')(1 animal)
Summons III (Fc) ..... (-)(varies)(100')

CREATIONS (Animist)

Sustain Self (U) ..... (self) (1 day)(sclf)
Airwall(Ec) ..... (10'xl0'x3')(C)(S0')(-50%MM/AT)
Water Production (P) ..... (-)(P)(10') (enough for 1 person)
Food Production (P) ..... (-)(P)(10)(enough for 1 person)
WatcrWall (Ec) ..... (10'xl0'xlYC)(50')(-80%MM/AT)
Woodwall(E) ..... (10'x20'x2)(lmnVlvl)(50')(S0HP)

BONE/MUSCLE WAYS (Animist)

Sprain Repair (U) ..... (1 Sprain)(P)(touch)(recover d10hrs)
Minor Frac. Rep. (U) ..... (1 Brcak)(P)(touch)(recover d10hrs)
Muscle Repair (U) ..... (1 Muscle)(P)(touch)(recover d10hrs)
Cartilage Repair (U) ..... (1 Joint)(P)(touch)(recover d10hrs)
Tendon Repair (U) ..... (1 Tendon) (P) (touch) (recover d10hrs)
Major Frac. Rep. (U) ..... (1 Break)(P)(touch)(recover d10hrs)

ORGAN WAYS (Animist)

Nasal Repair (U) ..... (1 Nose)(P)(touch)
Minor Nerve Repair (U) ..... (1 Area)(P)(touch)(d10hrs)
Minor Ear Repair (U) ..... (1 Ear)(P)(touch)(d10hrs)
Minor Eye Repair (U) ..... (1 Eyc)(P)(touch)(d10hrs)
Major Nerve Repair (U) ..... (1 Area)(P)(touch)(d10hrs)
Major Ear Repair (U) ..... (1 Ear)(P)(touch)(d10hrs)

BLOOD WAYS (Animist)

Clotting I (U) ..... (1 Target)(P)(touch)(-1hp/rnd)
Cut Repair (U) ..... (1 Targct)(P)(touch)(-1hp/rnd)
Minor Vessel Rep. (U) ..... (1 Target)(P)(touch)(-3hp/rnd)
Clotting V(U) ..... (1 Target)(P)(touch)(-5hp/rnd)
Cut Repair III (U) ..... (1 Target)(P)(touch)(-3hp/rnd)
Major Vessel Rep. (U) ..... (1 wound)(P)(touch)(-5hp/rnd)

DIRECT CHANNELING (Animist)

Preservation (U) ..... (1 Body) (1 hr/lvl) (10) (Uncon if alive)
Intuitions I (I) ..... (sclf)(-)(sclf)(vision next min)
Dream I (I) ..... (scli)(-)(sclf)
Lifekeeping (I) ..... (1 Body)(1hr/lvl)(10)(within 12 rnds)
Intuitions III (I) ..... (self)(-)(self)(vision 3 mins)
Death's Tale (I) ..... (1 Body)(-)(10')

PLANT MASTERY (Animist)

Plant Lore (I) ..... (1 Plant)(-)(touch)
Plant Tongues (U) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)
Inst. Herb Cures (U) ..... (1 Herb)(-)(touch)
Herb Mastery (U) ..... (1 Herb)(P)(touch)(*2 potency)
Plant Location (P) ..... (1 Plant)(-)(1 mile)
Herb Cleansing (U) ..... (1 herb)(P)(10')

NATURE'S GUISES (Ranger)

Hues(F) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)(+50 hiding)
Shade (F) ..... (100'r)(10min/lvl)(touch)(+25 hiding)
Freeze (Fc) ..... (1cu'/rnd)(C)(10)(down to -30'F)
Silent Moves (F) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)(1'R)
Self Cloaking (Fc) ..... (self)(Q (self)(+75 hiding)
Light(F) ..... (10'R)(10 min/lvl)(touch)

PATH MASTERY (Ranger)

Pathlore(I) ..... (10'R)(-)(sclf)
Trap Detection (Ic) ..... (5'R)(1min/lvl)(10')(75%outdoors)
Tracking (Ic) ..... (self)(C)(self)(+50 Tracking)
Path Tale (I) ..... (self)(-)(self)(up to 1hr/lvl)
Path Finding(Ic) ..... (1mi'R)(C)(1 mile)
Tracks Lore (I) ..... (-)(-)(touch)(visual, +25 tracking)

NATURE'S WAYS (Ranger)

Water Finding (I) ..... (1mi'R)(-)(self)
Fire Starting (F) ..... (1'R)(P)(touch)
Heat Resistance (U*c) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)(200F, +20RR,-20 vs E AT) Cold
Resistance (U*c) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)(-20F, +20RR, -20 vs E AT)
Food Finding (I) ..... (1mi'R)(-)(self)
Sterilization (P) ..... (1cu'/lvl)(-)(self)

MOVING WAYS (Ranger)

Stonerunning (F) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)(up to 70°)
Limbwalking(F) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)
Swimming (F*) ..... (self)(5min/lvl)(self)
Sandrunning (F) ..... (self)(1min/lvl)(self)
Waterwalking (F) ..... (self) (1min/lvl) (self)
Limbrunning (F) ..... (sclf)(1min/lvl)(self)

(E) = Elemental Spell, no RR (F) = Force Spell (P) = Passive Spell (U) = Utility Spell (I) = Informational Spell, no RR

* = instantaneous, no charging c = requires concentration C = spell lasts as long as concentration P = permanent effects AT = attacks MIS = missile attacks MM = moving maneuver 1 min = 6 rnds 1 hr = 360 rnds Spell Charging: 0 rnd (-30), 1 rnd (-15), 2 rnds (+0), 3 rnds (+ 10), 4 rnds (+20) FORMAT = (Area of Effect)(Duration)(Range)(Effect) NB: (-) = instantaneous or no AoE

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